

WORKERS WORLD

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!

workers.org

OCT. 30, 2008

VOL. 50, NO. 43

50¢

Rep. John Lewis is right McCain-Palin racism 'playing with fire'

By Fred Goldstein

Rep. John Lewis of Georgia, an African American and former civil rights leader, condemned the McCain-Palin campaign for "playing with fire" after a series of anti-Obama campaign rallies in which "Kill him," "Off with his head," "Terrorist" and other threats and racist epithets were yelled in plain hearing of the candidates and the media. An African-American cameraman was told to "Sit down, boy" during one of Palin's rallies.

Lewis accused the campaign of "sowing hatred and division" and stated: "During another period in history, in the not too distant past, there was a governor of the state of Alabama named George Wallace who also became a presidential candidate. George Wallace never threw a bomb. He never fired a gun, but he created the climate and the conditions that encouraged vicious attacks. ... Because of this atmosphere, four little girls were killed one Sunday morning when a church was bombed in Birmingham, Alabama."

Lewis knows whereof he speaks. He was one of the leaders of the Selma, Ala., voters' rights march in 1965 and had his skull split open by Wallace's stormtrooper police during the "Bloody Sunday" march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

The McCain-Palin campaign demanded an apology. Lewis issued some mild-mannered retreat about having been able to "phrase it better," but he did not apologize. And he was right not to. In fact, a few days later, YouTube carried a video of a news report from Fairfield, Ohio, where an effigy of Barack Obama with a rope around his neck was hung on the front lawn of a racist, just above a McCain-Palin campaign sign.

The McCain-Palin campaign has become more openly right-wing and racist since Palin joined the ticket. Not that McCain isn't a racist. His contemptuous reference to Obama as "that one" was his way of sending the right-wing base of his followers

a message that he was indeed racist enough to say it openly on national television.

The continued robocall attacks trying to stick the "terrorist" label on Obama are also a not-so-subtle racist message. They blend with the Republican leadership's campaign that spreads rumors Obama is a Muslim while surrogates for McCain and Palin continually refer to him as "Barack Hussein Obama." The point is to stoke anti-Muslim racism and then attach it to Obama. Surely John Lewis's accusations of "sowing the seeds of hatred and division" are right on target.

One of the treacherous features of the campaign is the way those in the capitalist establishment who are opposed to Palin have framed their opposition. For the most part, it revolves around her "lack of qualifications."

The question of whether Palin, or any other bourgeois presidential or vice-presidential candidate, is "qualified" to carry out the aims of U.S. imperialism is a problem for the capitalist class to worry about. The question for the working class and the oppressed regarding imperialist candidates is not these qualifications but their politics.

Klanswoman in three-piece suit

What the capitalist pundits do not want to talk about in relation to Palin is the fact that she is the candidate of the ultra-right. Palin has injected energy into the lynch-mob atmosphere at campaign rallies—so much so that it has reverberations among the Black population in Alaska.

"Alaska's black leaders say they're not surprised to see Gov. Sarah Palin at the center of the controversy over injecting the race issue into the presidential campaign," was the lead into an Associated Press dispatch of Oct. 18 from Anchorage. "She has no sensi-

tivity to minorities," said Baptist minister Rev. Alonzo Patterson, president of the Alaska Black Leadership Conference. The dispatch went on to say: "Many of Palin's black constituents say they are disgusted with the campaign's racial overtones. 'It's really been like you're going to a Ku Klux Klan rally,' said Javis Odom, an Anchorage minister. 'Gov. Palin is showing her true colors on the national stage.'"

Black Alaskans know Palin up close. Palin opposed a proclamation endorsing a festival that marks the freeing of the slaves. She has attended conventions of the ultra-right Alaska Independence Party, which considers the Civil War in the U.S. to be an "act of Northern aggression."

When she took office as governor she refused to reappoint two Black officials. In a tense meeting with Black leaders to discuss appointments, she was openly hostile. "Her top lip got really tight" when the question of diversity came up.

Black Alaskans make up 4 percent of the population. Native Alaskan tribes make up 18 percent of the population. Palin has been just as racist and colonialist to the Native peoples.

She has challenged federal rulings upholding Native rights to subsistence fishing. She is the point person of the commercial and sports fishing industries that want to expand into Native territories. Similarly she has fought legally to take traditional hunting rights away from Native Alaskans in order to enhance sports hunting, a significant profit-mak-

Continued on page 2

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT: A SOCIALIST GUIDE TO THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

- Will **YOU** fight back against the bosses' attacks? 9-12
- Capitalism can't meet human needs; socialism can!
- Who's to blame for the foreclosure epidemic? 9-12

STOP ALL EXECUTIONS!



Act NOW
to save
Troy Davis 8
Texas activists
mobilize 3

BUDGET CUTS, EVICTIONS *Must go!* 4, 5, 8

Lehman Bros.
A link to slavery 3

WW in 1988
Eve of Soviet Party Congress 6



Subscribe to Workers World

☐ Four weeks trial: \$1 ☐ One year: \$25

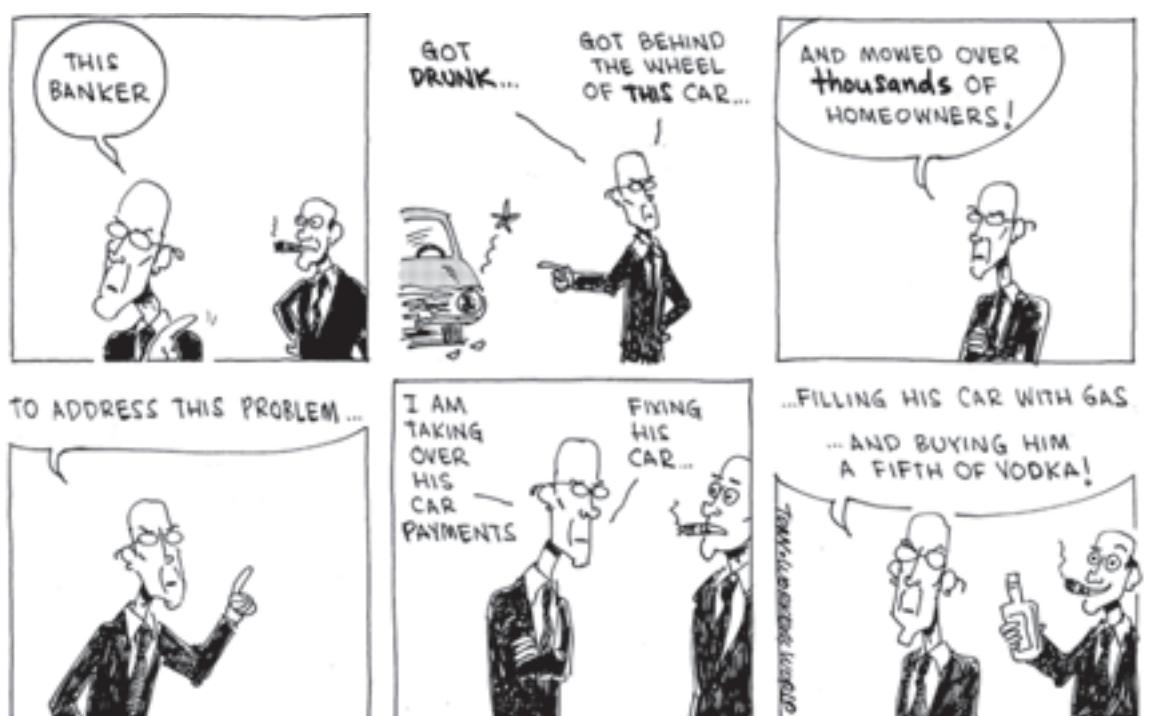
NAME _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

WORKERS WORLD
55 W. 17 St. NY, NY 10011 212-627-2994 www.workers.org



Right wing attempts to suppress voters

By Caleb T. Maupin
Cleveland

A mass movement in Ohio among students, oppressed people and the working class has resulted in 600,000 people registering to vote for the first time. The Republican Party, the right wing of the corporate ruling class—which is overwhelmingly aware that these new voters will most likely not be voting for them—has responded with one of their well-practiced methods: the disenfranchisement of poor and Black voters.

A massive voter purge of 200,000 people in Ohio was attempted by the Republicans and blocked by the U.S. Supreme Court. These 200,000 people would have been prevented from voting merely because their forms did not match the Secretary of State’s records exactly.

A similar tactic was carried out in 2000 in Florida,

where thousands of mostly Black registered voters were kept from voting. In order to avoid the ugly scenes of oppressed people being dragged away from polls by police, a new method of disenfranchisement has been developed in Ohio.

Voters whose names have been purged from the rolls will be given “provisional ballots.” However, these second-class ballots are not likely to be counted.

In 2004, voters in highly-Democratic areas in Ohio such as inner-city Cleveland faced long lines and a lack of voting machines, while machines were plentiful in rural conservative areas with smaller populations.

Clearly, it seems that when the rich are not satisfied with the election results, the votes of the oppressed, who fought so hard merely to win the right to cast them, are expendable. □

Palin-McCain racism ‘playing with fire’

Continued from page 1
ing enterprise in Alaska.

While being forced to recognize tribal sovereignty, Palin refuses to recognize the rights of the tribes to exercise that sovereignty. She has held this position despite court rulings overturning her policies.

Palin was brought up in politics by the ultra-right in Alaska, including activists in the fascist John Birch Society and the Alaska Independence Party. Her racist and right-wing conduct in the presidential campaign is a continuation of her colonialist, pro-big-business, right-wing political origins.

The capitalist establishment has all the resources to unearth this and much more, but they are silent and confine themselves to superficial talk about “qualifications.”

The multinational working class should be concerned with the right-wing, racist direction of both McCain and Palin.

These forces are already preparing to interfere at the polls to try to influence the election by intimidation and obstruction. Should Obama win the presidency, the right and the ultra right will no longer have Bush in the White House. His regime has kept them quiet.

The forces that are now gathering around McCain, and especially Palin, are not going to go away after the election. On the contrary, they are preparing for a campaign against Obama after the election, should he win. In particular they will mount a campaign of scapegoating for the capitalist economic crisis and the suffering it causes. The workers and the oppressed must remain vigilant and prepared to do battle with these reactionary forces. □

‘Please help us get my brother home’

The following appeal was written on Oct. 16 by Betty Ann Peltier-Solano, executive coordinator of the Leonard Peltier Defense Offense Committee and Leonard’s sister. You can read more about Leonard’s case on the Friends of Peltier Web site, www.FreePeltierNow.org. Ms. Peltier-Solano ends the appeal with these words, “Time to set him free ... because it is the RIGHT thing to do.”



Leonard is once again being uprooted and relocated to another prison. Although this seems to be a strategy by the federal government to disrupt his defense committee, we can take advantage of the limbo Leonard is in right now by demanding that the Bureau of Prisons transfer him to a facility closer to his home reservation. Turtle Mountain is requesting that Leonard be transferred to the reservation’s custody, and in the meantime there are federal facilities in Sandstone, Minn., and Oxford, Wis., which could accommodate him.

Please send the following correspondence or similar as soon as possible to:

Federal Bureau of Prisons
Designation and Sentence Computation Center (DSCC)
Grand Prairie Office Complex
U.S. Armed Forces Reserve Complex
346 Marine Forces Drive
Grand Prairie, TX 75051
Re: Leonard Peltier #89637-132
Dear DSCC:

I am contacting you seeking consideration for Mr. Leonard Peltier, who will be transferred from Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, in the near future. Mr. Peltier has been a model prisoner and deserves to be transferred to a lower security prison. Also, Mr. Peltier should be transferred to a facility close to his home based on the hardship policy of the Bureau of Prisons, because his family has grown older and is on a fixed income which limits the time they can visit him. Mr. Peltier has served over 32 years in prison and deserves to be close to his family during this crucial time in their lives. For these reasons I ask that you transfer Mr. Peltier to the Turtle Mountain Reservation’s custody as soon as possible. The alternatives that would help satisfy this request are either the federal facility in Sandstone, Minn., or Oxford, Wis., as both are near in proximity to his family.

In the name of all things good and humane, I ask you to do the right thing for compassion’s sake in the transfer of Leonard Peltier today. Thank you and may the Creator bless you.

Sincerely,
Your name. Your street address, city, state, zip code
Mail USPS or e-mail to: GRA-DSC/PolicyCorrespondence&AdminRemedies@bop.gov or fax to: 972-352-4395

This week ...



★ In the U.S.	
McCain-Palin racism 'playing with fire'	1
Right wing continues to suppress voters	2
Leonard Peltier’s sister’s urgent plea	2
Juanita Young acquitted	3
Texas activists mobilize for annual march	3
Lehman Bros. link to slavery	3
Will General Motors swallow Chrysler?	4
State budget cuts cause anger, fightback	4
Evictions halted by some sheriffs	5
Latin American trade unionists tour U.S.	5
‘Bail out Main Street, not Wall Street’	8
Emergency actions to save Troy Davis’ life	8

★ Around the world	
WW 1988: On eve of the Soviet Party Conference	6
Protests in Canadian cities denounce war in Afghanistan	6
Iraqis protest U.S. occupation	6
Situation dire for people in Colombia	7
Historical background to Congo crisis	7

★ Editorials	
Summit of sharks	8

★ Socialist guide to economic crisis	
What will YOU do?	S1
Why capitalism can’t meet human needs	S1
Who’s to blame for the foreclosure epidemic?	S2
How \$700 billion could fund people’s needs	S2
The ups and downs of the stock market	S3
Socialismo es la respuesta	S4

Workers World
55 West 17 Street
New York, N.Y. 10011
Phone: (212) 627-2994
Fax: (212) 675-7869
E-mail: editor@workers.org
Web: www.workers.org

Vol. 50, No. 43 • Oct. 30, 2008
Closing date: Oct. 21, 2008

Editor: Deirdre Griswold
Technical Editor: Lal Roohk
Managing Editors: John Catalinotto, LeiLani Dowell, Leslie Feinberg, Monica Moorehead, Gary Wilson
West Coast Editor: John Parker
Contributing Editors: Abayomi Azikiwe, Greg Butterfield, G. Dunkel, Fred Goldstein, Teresa Gutierrez, Larry Hales, David Hoskins, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Cheryl LaBash, Milt Neidenberg, Bryan G. Pfeifer, Minnie Bruce Pratt
Technical Staff: Sue Davis, Shelley Ettinger, Bob McCubbin, Maggie Vascassenno
Mundo Obrero: Carl Glenn, Teresa Gutierrez, Berta Joubert-Ceci, Donna Lazarus, Michael Martínez, Carlos Vargas

Copyright © 2008 Workers World. Verbatim copying and distribution of articles is permitted in any medium without royalty provided this notice is preserved.

Workers World (ISSN-1070-4205) is published weekly except the first week of January by WW Publishers, 55 W. 17 St., N.Y., N.Y. 10011. Phone: (212) 627-2994. Subscriptions: One year: \$25; foreign and institutions: \$35. Letters to the editor may be condensed and edited. Articles can be freely reprinted, with credit to Workers World, 55 W. 17 St., New York, NY 10011. Back issues and individual articles are available on microfilm and/or photocopy from University Microfilms International, 300 Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106. A searchable archive is available on the Web at www.workers.org.

A headline digest is available via e-mail subscription. Subscription information is at www.workers.org/email.php.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Workers World, 55 W. 17 St., 5th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10011.

JOIN US.

Workers World Party (WWP) fights on all issues that face the working class and oppressed peoples—Black and white, Latin@, Asian, Arab and Native peoples, women and men, young and old, lesbian, gay, bi, straight, trans, disabled, working, unemployed and students. If you would like to know more about WWP, or to join us in these struggles, contact the branch nearest you.

National Office
55 W. 17 St.,
New York, NY 10011
212-627-2994;
Fax (212) 675-7869
wwp@workers.org

Atlanta
P.O. Box 424,
Atlanta, GA 30301
404-627-0185
atlanta@workers.org

Baltimore
426 E. 31 St.,
Baltimore, MD 21218
410-235-7040
baltimore@workers.org

Boston
284 Amory St.,
Boston, MA 02130
617-983-3835
Fax (617) 983-3836
boston@workers.org

Buffalo, N.Y.
367 Delaware Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14202
716-566-1115
buffalo@workers.org

Chicago
27 N. Wacker Dr. #138
Chicago, IL 60606
773-381-5839
chicago@workers.org

Cleveland
P.O. Box 5963
Cleveland, OH 44101
216-531-4004
cleveland@workers.org

Denver
denver@workers.org

Detroit
5920 Second Ave.,
Detroit, MI 48202
313-831-0750
detroit@workers.org

Houston
P.O. Box 595
Houston,
TX 77001-0595
713-861-5965
houston@workers.org

Los Angeles
111N. La Brea Ave., #408
Inglewood, CA 90301
310-677-8647
la@workers.org

Milwaukee
milwaukee@workers.org

Philadelphia
P.O. Box 23843,
Philadelphia,
PA 19143
610-931-2615
phila@workers.org

Raleigh, N.C.
raleigh@workers.org

Richmond, Va.
P.O. Box 14602,
Richmond, VA 23221
richmond@workers.org

Rochester, N.Y.
585-436-6458
rochester@workers.org

San Diego, Calif.
P.O. Box 33447
San Diego, CA 92163
619-692-0355

San Francisco
2940 16th St., #207
San Francisco, CA 94103
415-738-4739
sf@workers.org

Washington, D.C.
P.O. Box 57300,
Washington, DC 20037,
dc@workers.org

A blow to police brutality

Juanita Young acquitted

By Stephen Millies
Bronx, N.Y.

Juanita Young was found not guilty of six misdemeanor counts on Oct. 17 by a Bronx jury. On Nov. 26, 2006, police and Emergency Medical Services workers came in response to a 911 call to Young's home. Instead of helping, the police started attacking Young. They drew their guns.

Young was arrested and taken to a hospital where she was handcuffed to a bed for days. The day before, cops had fired 50 shots at Sean Bell in Jamaica, Queens, killing him.

Young has been targeted since her 23-year-old son, Malcolm Ferguson, was killed by New York police on March 1, 2000. Young works in the Oct. 22nd Coalition to Stop Police Brutality with other family members whose loved ones have been killed by cops.

Malcolm Ferguson was unarmed and had committed no crime. His death was ruled "justifiable homicide." On June 6, 2007, a civil court jury ruled that excessive force was used in his death.

Young was illegally evicted by her landlord in June 2003. Police pushed her down the stairs. One of the cops told her, "No rallies for you today."

Judge Benitez dismissed Young's trespassing charges. Young's lawyer at that time was Lynne Stewart, who is now facing jail time for defending Muslims indicted

under the Patriot Act. Another civil court jury in October 2007 found that excessive force was used against Young.

Young was again arrested at a World Can't Wait anti-war demonstration in November 2005. Before her arraignment the charges were dropped.

At her recent trial following the police attack in her home, Young was defended by David Rankin and Geoffrey Stewart, son of Lynne Stewart, in Judge Margaret Clancy's court.

Young's supporters in court included former political prisoner and Young Lords Party member Panama Vicente Alba. Another supporter, activist Mia Cruz, was kicked out of the courtroom and given a ticket for disorderly conduct.

Assistant District Attorney Allyson Kohlmann called four witnesses: emergency medical technician Jennifer Lampert and three cops.

They painted Young as 'violent' and 'out of control.' According to them Young threw numerous cans at police without hitting anybody. Yet none of these "weapons" were introduced into evidence.

Young actually threw one plastic container of cake frosting mix at a wall. Lampert claimed that Young was scratching and biting people, but cops didn't report any injuries.

Police officer Sean Higgins said Young attacked a whole line of armed police officers.

Both Higgins and Sgt. Nolan claimed

Young screamed "f---g white devils" at the police. District Attorney Kohlmann stated that Young shouted this at Higgins just outside the courtroom.

Young's neighbor, Penny Davis, said a police sergeant "stormed into the apartment" and grabbed her by mistake. "The tall cop"—Higgins—then said Young "is the one."

The sergeant "snatched" Young and pushed her into the bedroom. "All I could hear was screaming," said Davis.

After kicking out her bedroom door, Young walked into her kitchen and was pushed to the floor by police. "They were kicking the crap out of her," said Davis. They stood her up like "a rag doll" and handcuffed Young.

Davis screamed, "Don't shoot her!" when cops drew their guns.

Young told the jury that she had been a teacher for mentally challenged children until her youngest daughter was born.

Young has had asthma for 30 years and has been legally blind since she was 18 or 19 years old. Young told the jury what

she told police: "You killed my son. You abused me. You're not taking my daughter." Kohlmann had tried to exclude any testimony about how Young's son was killed.

Police told Young, "We should have killed you," as they handcuffed her.

Young insisted she never used the term "white devils." The jury could see Black, Latin@, Asian and white supporters in the courtroom.

Kohlmann cross-examined Young and tried to provoke her. It didn't work. Kohlmann also baited Young about her civil suit on her son's killing.

Geoffrey Stewart appealed to the jurors to use their common sense and acquit Young. Kohlmann wanted a guilty verdict. She even insinuated Davis lied because of an interest in Young's suit. It took the jury two-and-a half hours to find Young not guilty. Young told WBAI's Sally O'Brien: "I'm feeling very happy now. I'm overjoyed."

The writer attended many of Young's trial proceedings.

To protest pre-holiday executions

Texas activists mobilize for annual march

By Gloria Rubac
Houston

"With the holiday season five weeks away, early birds are counting shopping days. Texas is counting execution days," says Elizabeth Ann Stein, producer of Execution Watch, a Houston radio show aired live from 6 to 7 pm on www.KPFT.org on days when executions are scheduled to take place.

"Between now and Nov. 20, the busiest death chamber in the United States will give lethal injections to 10 men. During one three-day period, a prisoner will be executed each day," posted Stein on the radio show's blog at www.execution-watch.org/blog.

If these executions are carried out, this will bring to 21 the Texas total for people being put to death in 2008.

It has been five years since Texas executed anyone during the month of December.

In 2003 the Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement called two December executions to the attention of the public and the media. The TDPAM stated that it was "horrifying to stand in front of the death house and protest executions while a large holiday display flashing red and green lights on the tall brick walls surrounding the Huntsville Prison Unit announced, 'We Wish Your Family a Happy Holiday Season.'"

Since then, there have been no executions during or after "Thanksgiving," Christmas and New Year's Day.

On Oct. 25 Texas abolitionists will gather in Houston for the 9th Annual March to End Executions. The honored guest speaker will be one of nine people exonerated off Texas death row, Clarence Brandley.

Brandley, an African American, spent close to 10 years in Huntsville for a crime he did not commit. When the sheriffs picked up Brandley and another man for questioning about a murder, they told the two men, "One of you all's going to pay for this. Since you're the n - - - r, your elected," Brandley recounts.

Since his release in 1991, Brandley continues to speak out about the injustice of the death penalty, always commenting that if President Clinton had passed the Anti-terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act while he was in prison, he would have been executed instead of speaking out.

The theme of the 9th annual march is "The Death Penalty—Guilty on All Counts! Shut It Down." Speakers will focus on how the death penalty targets the poor and people of color, including how innocent people are executed through state misconduct and the Law of Parties, which allows the death penalty to be applied to accomplices in murder cases.

The march will be led by Texas's newest abolition organization, Kids Against the Death Penalty, formed by the family of Jeff Wood, an innocent man sent to death row under the Law of Parties. Wood received a stay of execution in August hours before his date with death. His large family and supporters built a support campaign and the Texas governor granted the stay until next spring.

Dozens of family members of those on death row will speak, some coming from as far away as the Rio Grande Valley. Connie Wright, the wife of Greg Wright, who is scheduled to be executed five days after the march despite evidence of innocence, will also be featured.

Spoken word artist and Chicana activist, Dee!Colonize, will educate and entertain the rally with her original words about capital punishment as well as sharing the words of some poets on death row.

The SHAPE Center Council of Elders will march behind the Kids, and the Free Radicals Marching Band will provide a lively beat to accompany the chants.

Since executions resumed this past May after an eighth-month pause while the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on the constitutionality of lethal injections, there have been 27 executions in the U.S. One hundred percent have been in the South, including 11 in Texas, four in Virginia and three in Georgia.

The writer is a TDPAM organizer.

Is this karma, or what!?

Lehman Bros. sink to slavery

By Dolores Cox

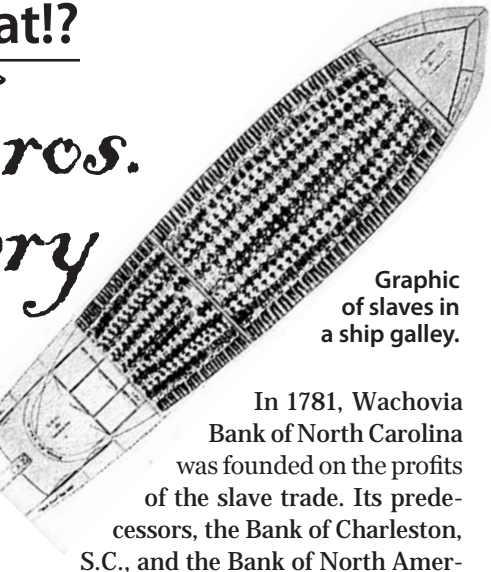
Oh, how the mighty have fallen. Several financial institutions involved in the current U.S. economic crisis—Lehman Bros., Wachovia Bank, Chase Bank and Aetna Inc.—have interesting background stories and one thing in common: their connection to the inhumane institution of slavery.

Numerous capitalist merchants benefited hugely from the transatlantic slave trade and the industries associated with it. For several centuries the economies of the U.S. North and South were intertwined by slavery. By the mid-1800s, capital investment in slaves was higher than the value of land or any other capital worth.

Southern slave labor made New York City the financial capital of the world. Cotton produced on plantations became the main product of export and a major source of the city's wealth. Large textile mills gave New York State a booming economy.

Both cotton and enslaved workers treated as "property" were among the first commodities on the stock market. Cotton trading accounted for the country's expansive growth for an extended historical period. Profits from the slave trade financed the industrial revolution.

The Lehman family members were Alabama cotton brokers. In 1850 they founded Lehman Brothers Investments, acquiring their capital and wealth by investing and trading in cotton. Three sons moved to New York City in 1858, where they later helped to establish the New York Cotton Exchange (1870).



Graphic of slaves in a ship galley.

In 1781, Wachovia Bank of North Carolina was founded on the profits of the slave trade. Its predecessors, the Bank of Charleston, S.C., and the Bank of North America, made loans to slave "owners" and accepted slaves as collateral. When the owners defaulted on the loans the banks became the new slave owners.

The Morgan family of Massachusetts was a major stock broker. JP Morgan brokers became JP Morgan/Chase. Their predecessor banks also made loans to slave owners and accepted 13,000 enslaved Africans as "collateral." When owners defaulted, the banks acquired their fortunes by becoming the new owners of 1,250 slaves. Chase Bank is owned by the Rockefeller family.

Another profitable company was Aetna Insurance Co., which sold insurance to slave owners wanting to protect their investments of human cargo aboard the slave ships and on the plantations, should a slave die. The life insurance policies, issued in the 1850s, were intended to compensate slave owners for the loss of people who were at that time considered "property."

Wall Street and slavery are connected in other ways. Wall Street got its name because of a physical wall built there along the river to protect New York City from invasion. Slave labor built the wall and much of the city. Slave auctions were held at the foot of Wall Street when ships

Continued on page 5

Will General Motors swallow Chrysler?

By Martha Grevatt

Corporate mergers go by different names. They may be called a partnership, alliance, takeover (friendly or hostile) or even “a marriage of equals.” In 1999 Michael Moore staged a mock “wedding” between Daimler and Chrysler.

For workers at Chrysler and General Motors, it doesn’t matter what the industry experts call it. What’s important for the 266,000 GM and 66,000 Chrysler workers around the world is that the merger of the two giants appears imminent. According to unnamed sources, Wall Street is pushing hard for it to go through before Election Day, if possible.

When it comes to jobs, Chrysler workers know the score all too well. In 1986, just six years after filing for bankruptcy, Chrysler was strong enough to buy American Motors. The Big Three were now really only three. AMC plants were shuttered almost immediately. Within a few years the Jeep brand was all that was left of the 32-year-old company, which itself was a merger of Nash, Hudson and later Jeep.

In 1999 the German conglomerate Daimler-Benz bought out Chrysler. In 2001, after 73 years of production, the Plymouth brand was eliminated. Since the February 2007 announcement that Chrysler might be sold—it was sold six months later to the private Wall Street firm Cerberus—25,000 jobs have been slashed and more are on the chopping block.

In that same time period, GM and Ford workers suffered comparable job losses.

October 2008 has seen announcements of new layoff and plant closings by GM, including the previously unmentioned closing of a Michigan stamping plant next year. That news, and news that a plant in Janesville, Wis., will be closed earlier than scheduled, lifted the price of GM stock, which had tumbled to a 60-year low.

General Motors Acceptance Corporation—the financial arm of GM of which Cerberus owns 51 percent—announced plans to lay off several thousand workers. (Associated Press, Sept. 3)

Auto columnists are speculating on the viability of a GM-Chrysler merger from a profitability standpoint. Analysts are suggesting that Cerberus wants to unload Chrysler in exchange for GM’s share of GMAC. (Reuters, Oct. 11)

Having gotten into the mortgage market, GMAC has been a drag on GM’s profits. However, if the government bailout would lift GMAC out of the red, Cerberus could consolidate GMAC and Chrysler Financial into one streamlined operation needing fewer workers. GM might benefit by eliminating a competitor, making inroads into the Jeep and minivan markets, and regaining its status as the number one automaker in the world. GM is reportedly lusting after Chrysler’s \$11-billion cash reserves.

Workers need not suffer

Mentioned only in passing are the staggering number of livelihoods in jeopardy. Since GM and Chrysler cater to similar markets, workers at both companies could

see a repeat of the Chrysler-AMC consolidation, but on a much larger scale. More communities will be destroyed—or further destroyed—when laid-off autoworkers aren’t paying taxes or spending money they no longer have.

Unions in the U.S., Canada and Europe have made statements opposing the potential deal. Klaus Franz, head of the union representing workers at GM Europe, called it “a major catastrophe.” (Reuters, Oct. 13) The Auto Workers union, with only 33,000 members at Chrysler and 72,000 at GM, faces a bleak future if this merger occurs.

The workers—always the last to know—are being kept in the dark. News stories have contradicted one another. One had talks “gaining momentum,” yet then gave the merger a 50-50 chance. (New York Times, Oct. 16) An in-house letter from Chrysler CEO Bob Nardelli made only vague references to “third parties who are interested in exploring future possibilities with Chrysler” and stated that “to protect the integrity of our Company and those with whom we meet, we do not confirm or disclose the nature of our business meetings.”

Damn trade secrecy! The workers have a right to know! Even with all the restructuring there are still hundreds of thousands of GM and Chrysler workers—in Africa, Asia, Europe, Australia and the Americas—whose futures now hang on the edge of a cliff. They face layoffs during a deep crisis of capitalist overproduction.

The workers and their communities have invested labor and tax dollars in these plants, and they have an equity stake

in keeping them open. They have the right to know and the right to say no.

Amid the fog of secrecy and outright lies one thing is clear: nothing is going to happen without Wall Street’s approval. Both Chrysler and GM are neck-deep in debt, having borrowed billions to finance their already drastic restructurings. Their creditors—JPMorgan Chase, Goldman Sachs and a few of the other fiends now at the head of the line for a government handout—have money to lend after picking taxpayers’ pockets.

Besides, they have been raking in profits on the money they lent Cerberus to buy Chrysler, and are now pushing Cerberus to shove the stripped-down car company onto someone else—another lucrative deal for them.

This job-killing merger is a merger of cold, conniving thieves.

It’s not enough for union leaders to state the obvious: the GM-Chrysler merger would be bad. The UAW has been hamstrung by its narrow, protectionist, “Buy American” mindset. It’s time to reach out to workers of the world. Autoworkers can find common cause with those facing layoffs in retail, banking, construction, health care, food service and government.

During the Great Depression the Unemployed Councils carried signs reading, “Fight Don’t Starve!” Ford goons shot the marchers down in 1932, but the working class kept fighting. For millions losing jobs and homes and struggling to make ends meet, it’s time to “Fight Don’t Suffer!”

The writer has worked 21 years at Chrysler’s Twinsburg, Ohio, Stamping plant. E-mail: mgrevatt@workers.org.

WorkersWorld
COMMENTARY

State budget cuts cause anger, fightback

By Frank Neisser
Boston

Poor and working people are fighting back as the economic crisis slams into the Massachusetts state budget. On Oct. 15, Gov. Deval Patrick announced planned state budget cuts of over \$1 billion, including cutting 1,000 jobs. The cuts will be widespread, impacting state universities and community colleges, health insurance programs and dozens of social service programs—from assistance for at-risk teens to services for the mentally ill and the elderly.

Advocates for the blind are planning a late-October protest of Patrick’s elimination of funding for Ferguson Industries for the Blind, a state-run business in Malden, which will lead to layoffs of 25 visually-impaired workers. The advocates are also objecting to reductions in funding for basics like magnifying glasses and talking clocks for poor, elderly, blind residents. The state’s mental health budget will be cut by \$9.3 million. According to mental health workers, hundreds of people with mental disabilities will lose services, leading to hospitalizations, incarcerations and even deaths.

The biggest cuts, nearly \$300 million, will be to Medicaid payments to hospitals and health clinics for the poor. Family shelters will lose \$1 million, and there will be deep cuts in HIV/AIDS prevention funds and substance abuse programs. The Department of Social Services, responsible for protecting children from child abuse and neglect, will be cut by \$15 million.

Margaret Woovis, who runs a home care program for seniors, said she will lay off staff and cut services in half. “Epidemic is probably the word,” she said. “This is happening to everyone, everywhere.”

The Boston School Committee held a public hearing on Oct. 15 on the superintendent’s recent proposal to close and consolidate numerous schools. The hearing was packed with young people appealing to the committee not to close their schools. Schools serving the most at-risk students have been targeted for closing, further impacting oppressed communities already suffering from unequal access to quality education. The plan is an attack on desegregation, and also threatens the loss of union jobs.

City Councilor Chuck Turner, who heads the City Council’s Education Committee, has scheduled a public hearing on the closing plan for Oct. 21. The International Action Center and the Boston School Bus Drivers Union, USW Local 8751, are working with community organizations like Work for Quality and Boston Parents Organizing Network to fight these cuts. The union just successfully showed how to fight back against cutbacks, defeating a second round of company-attempted layoffs since ratification of their contract in September. The contract includes “no reduction in force” language, won by rank-and-file militant action.

On Oct. 15, Councilor Turner along with City Councilor Charles Yancey held the first of a series of “Community Foreclosure Prevention Meetings” at Prince Hall in Roxbury. Future meetings will also be held in Dorchester, Mattapan, Hyde Park and Roslindale. More than 80 homeowners, tenants, community organization members and lawyers from the National Lawyers Guild and the Greater Boston Legal Services participated in the event. Some signed on to the Women’s Fightback Network’s petition, which calls for the governor to declare an Economic State of Emergency, for a moratorium on



Oct. 18 protest demanding full funding for housing.

foreclosures and evictions, and for a restoration of utilities that have been shut off and the prevention of further utility shut-offs. It is reported that city officials say over 600 properties have been foreclosed this year in Boston and hundreds more properties may be foreclosed next year.

On Oct. 18 the Mass Alliance of HUD Tenants held a rally and march in downtown Boston demanding full funding for Section 8 and Public Housing. Three million families in HUD-subsidized apartments face displacement if Congress does not fully fund Section 8 and Public Housing. The National Alliance of HUD Tenants has presented a “Save Our Homes” platform to both the Obama and McCain campaigns, but the McCain campaign has refused to meet with the group. The demonstration marched to McCain headquarters in Boston to press their demands, but received no response from the McCain staffers.

The anger of poor and working people

against the effects of the economic crisis is on the rise. A tidal wave of fightback is sure to come. □

Become a Workers World Sponsor for \$100 and treat yourself to a free copy of the timely new book Low-Wage Capitalism

Support the paper that supports the workers. We rely completely on your donations.

Become a member of the Workers World Supporter Program. Help build the newspaper year round. Sponsors who contribute \$100 a year or more receive a year’s subscription to the print edition of the newspaper, a monthly letter, five free trial subscriptions to the print edition, and a book from World View Forum.

Send a check or money order using the coupon on the facing page.

To contribute using a credit card, use our secure online Web site at www.workers.org (See Support WW)

A sign of rising anger

Evictions halted by some sheriffs

By Kris Hamel

Illinois' Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart made national headlines Oct. 9 when he announced his office would no longer evict renters after property owners go into foreclosure. Many renters have no idea that the owner is in foreclosure. They pay their monthly rent and find out they are being evicted when a dumpster arrives and the sheriff comes to throw them and their belongings out on the street.

In an op-ed piece in the Chicago Sun Times, Dart said this scenario occurs "too many times" and renters often have "no fair warning that they were about to be thrown out of their home."

Dart blamed this situation squarely on the banks and mortgage lenders, which under state law are required to know the occupants of mortgage-held properties and notify them in advance of a pending foreclosure. Instead, the banks disregard the rights of tenants and, said Dart, "expect taxpayers to pay for that investigative work for them. That stops today. We won't be doing the banks' work for them anymore." (www.suntimes.com)

Dart stated: "I've come to this point after spending the last year trying to work with the banking industry, even asking the Legislature to pass a bill requiring them to—at a minimum—let us know if any children, disabled or senior citizens live at the home, so we can connect them with social services. That effort was killed by banking industry lobbyists."

Dart announced that he would resume evictions on Oct. 20 after Cook County and court officials agreed that lenders must note the existence of renters when they file eviction petitions in court and provide proof that all renters have received a 120-day notice of eviction. Sheriff's spokesperson Steve Patterson said, "We're not doing it" if mortgage holders don't abide by the new rules. Dart's office will also add a social worker to its staff to help renters find new housing and work with a financial crimes unit to investigate mortgage fraud. (progressillinois.com)

In Michigan, Genesee County Sheriff Robert J. Pickell announced a two-week moratorium on evictions carried out by his office. Undersheriff James Gage stated: "[We] looked at what Sheriff Dart had

done and we realized it's happening here too. ... This is a depressed enough area here around Flint. There is a lot of unemployment and this is just another kick in the teeth." (Detroit News, Oct. 17)

The sheriffs of Oakland and Macomb counties, both part of metropolitan Detroit, are considering similar measures. Last year, metro Detroit had the highest foreclosure rate in the U.S.

In Philadelphia, Sheriff John Green has refused to hold court-ordered auctions of foreclosed homes. "My staff and I watch the suffering every day and witness the heart-wrenching scenes as families ... face eviction." (www.phillysheriff.com)

In March 2008, the Philadelphia City Council unanimously passed a resolution calling on the sheriff and the Court of Common Pleas to impose an indefinite moratorium on foreclosure sales.

Sheriffs and bailiffs, like all police and the courts, are part of the repressive arm of the capitalist state. Their job is to protect the private property of the corporations and wealthy and maintain the status quo. Sure, some may be genuinely saddened by having to evict people, but more likely than

not they are driven by another, unstated motivation—fear of the masses rebelling.

There is growing anger by the people against the banks and financial institutions that have been bailed out by the government. These are the same banks that caused the housing foreclosure crisis devastating millions of working families around the U.S. Now the victims of this catastrophe are expected to foot the bill for the billionaires who caused it. How soon will it be before this untenable situation explodes?

Sheriffs are elected officials who are on the frontlines of the eviction process. The anger of people who have lost their homes and face unemployment, low wages and skyrocketing costs for life's necessities can't be contained indefinitely. Eviction blockades, like those that have occurred in Boston, where homeowners and supporters have chained themselves to dwellings and refused to leave, in stand-offs with police for hours, will soon become a common occurrence as the crisis deepens. The stances that some sheriffs have taken against the evictions, even in the short-term, will certainly help spark more militant, grassroots organizing. □

Struggle knows no borders

Latin American trade unionists tour U.S.

By Cheryl LaBash

Two union leaders from Latin America recently shared an impressive story of the gains for working and Indigenous people with workers and community activists across the U.S.

From Sept. 30 to Oct. 14 Fredy Franco, Sec.-Gen. of Nicaraguan University Professors, and Oscar Penagos, Sec.-Gen. of the telephone workers in Bogotá, Colombia, and a delegate to the Central Workers Union, met with service workers, students, rank-and-file fighters and elected officials.

The union/community collaboration in action organized in Boston (read Oct. 16 article at www.workers.org); New York; Raleigh, N.C.; Detroit; Oakland and Los Angeles, Calif.; Washington, D.C.; Chicago; and Toledo, Ohio, corresponded with a declaration of Latin American unions that met in Quito, Ecuador, in May 2008.

New economic priorities that put the poorest and most marginalized first over profit mean that education, work and health care are guaranteed rights for all



WW PHOTO: CHERYL LABASH

Left to right: tour organizer Ignacio Meneses, Fredy Franco, ILWU leader Clarence Thomas and Oscar Penagos during Oakland visit.

in a growing number of Latin American nations. However, a few countries—Colombia, Peru and Mexico—are still locked into the neoliberal imperialist economic order. Already in 2008 nearly fifty Colombian union leaders have been assassinated by paramilitaries paid by U.S. multinational corporations like Chiquita Brands, Drummond and Coca-Cola.

The snapshot of U.S. working-class issues and life explored during the tour included the history of struggles for the eight-hour workday at Haymarket Square in Chicago and against race and gender barriers at the Rosie the Riveter monument in Richmond, Calif.

That struggle is not just history but is still very much alive. On the Oakland docks, the Transport Workers Solidarity Committee and Million Worker March Movement leaders from the Longshore Workers Union pledged to oppose Plan Colombia.

These longshore workers reclaimed the May 1 holiday for U.S. workers in 2005 and shut down the West Coast docks in a "no peace, no work" 8-hour strike on May 1, 2008, against the Iraq and Afghanistan occupations. On May 1, 2006, and again in 2007 millions of immigrant workers, mostly from Latin America and especially

Mexico, took to the streets demanding their full rights.

On strike for more than 80 days, Moncure Plywood workers outside of Raleigh are on the front lines of today's fight to keep seniority rights and limit hours of work. They are the face of the neoliberal offensive against workers in the U.S., an offensive that workers in Latin America have also suffered but are now successfully pushing back. Franco

and Penagos pledged to the strikers to tell their story throughout the U.S. and to their unions in Nicaragua and Colombia, as well as ask the World Federation of Trade Unions to support their struggle for justice and workers' rights.

In every city, the touring union leaders met with immigrants forced to migrate to the U.S. due to unlivable conditions in their homelands created by "free trade" imperialist intervention that destroyed local economies and opportunities for work.

In Toledo the Farm Labor Organizing Committee served dinner at a meeting for Franco and Penagos where FLOC founder and president, Baldemar Velasquez, spoke of defending immigrant rights and gave updates on the struggle for justice for FLOC union organizer, Santiago Rafael, slain in Mexico.

The U.S./Cuba Labor Exchange will follow up this tour with the Dec. 5-7 International Labor Conference in Tijuana, Mexico, featuring families of the "Cuban Five" unjustly held in U.S. prisons. For online registration and information, visit laborexchange.blogspot.com.

The writer was on tour with the Latin American delegation.

Choose a Supporter Program option below:

- ☐ \$75 Enclosed to become a WW Supporter.
- ☐ \$100 Enclosed to become a WW Sponsor.
- ☐ \$300 Enclosed to become a WW Sustainer.
- ☐ One time donation of \$ _____.

☐ Please send me more information about the Supporter Program.

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
EMAIL _____ PHONE _____

Clip & return to
WW Publishers 55 W. 17th St., 5th Fl., NY, NY 10011
212.627.2994 fax: 212.675.7869
email: ww@workers.org

Is this karma, or what!?

Lehman Bros. sink to slavery

Continued from page 3

carrying enslaved Africans arrived.

Slavery resulted in these capitalistic enterprises becoming profitable and powerful. The foundation of U.S. capitalism was built on slave labor and racism. After the Civil War, the U.S. went from competitive capitalism to imperialism and became a financial empire.

Now the government is bailing out these same companies and the burden again is falling most heavily on the working class,

including the descendents of those slaves.

If only the enslaved Africans could have been fortunate enough to have been bailed out of the slavery system, but it's not too late for their descendents to be given reparations.

Sources for the article include the Black Holocaust Museum of Slavery in Philadelphia; "The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks" by Randall Robinson; and "Complicity: How the North Promoted, Prolonged, and Profited from Slavery" by Anne Farrow, Joel Lang and Jenifer Frank.

On the eve of the Soviet Party Conference

Below are excerpts from an article by Sam Marcy that appeared originally on May 26, 1988, during economic changes in the USSR promoted by Communist Party leader Mikhail Gorbachev. The full text can be found in the Archives section of workers.org in the book "Perestroika: a Marxist Critique."

The cheering in the imperialist press for perestroika seems to get louder with each passing day.

Where are the reforms leading? What is their true overall direction? Is perestroika, as the imperialist bourgeoisie hopes, a move away from the socialist perspective, from socialist planning? Or is it only a temporary retreat meant to lay the basis for a swifter momentum in socialist construction at a later date?

[T]he rebellions that recently took place in Armenia and Azerbaijan, the first of their kind since the Revolution and the Civil War, should be a matter of great importance [at the 19th Conference of the Communist Party]. Adequate representation by all sides would be especially necessary, with reports from the people concerned. There is scarcely an issue of more significance to socialist construction than the national question.

A remark by Gorbachev about the procedure for selecting delegates to the Conference is altogether disturbing and may breach the usual procedures by which Conferences and Party Congresses are organized. The Bolshevik Party was founded as the militant working class organizer of the vanguard. Its ideological standpoint as a proletarian party meant that the leadership had to ceaselessly strive to see to it that the social composition of the Party corresponded to its ideological

position as the vanguard of the working class. From its very inception the Party leadership sought to enroll workers, peasants and the rural poor, women and all the disadvantaged as the bulwarks of the future socialist dictatorship of the working class and the peasantry.

Even if this has been abandoned, even if only a formality or a shell remains of it, nevertheless, at the last Congress what was significant from the point of view of formality was the predominance of workers. There were also many from the collectives, many women, and many from the various nationalities in the USSR. Now we see a change with respect to the social composition of the Conference. Gorbachev recently said in a speech to editors and Party leaders, "There must be no more quotas, as we had in the past—so many workers and peasants, so many women and so forth."

This sounds really alarming. He then buttressed his remark by saying, "The principal political imperative is to elect active supporters of perestroika." What about those who are not supporters? If it's only for supporters, why have the Conference at all?

What about democratization? Is it only for the supporters of perestroika, even the most extreme ones who can scarcely be differentiated from outright bourgeois types? Doesn't this make a mockery out of the whole democratization process? It is well known that there is a considerable amount of opposition in the Party to perestroika.

If perestroika is to be the great turning point in Soviet society about which Gorbachev and his supporters are continually exhorting the population, does it not

rate an open discussion in the Party?

In all previous five-year plans, great enthusiasm was evident, coming particularly from the masses. But now it seems that no matter how much exhortation there is, no matter how many times the masses are told and retold that they are now co-owners in plants and industries, it does not seem to take hold. It must be that a good many feel alienated from ownership and that the restructuring plans have caused apprehension and uncertainty among the mass of the workers, although there is no evidence of an opposition movement in the working class.

The issue is how the changes will affect the workers, and most immediately how a price restructuring will affect them. A great eagerness was shown by the administration to restructure the prices of some 200,000 items, including food, household utensils, so forth and so on. This restructuring would supposedly put prices more in line with costs and ultimately benefit the workers, but it appears to be an upward movement, not a downward one.

Price is nothing but the monetary expression of value. Value is another name for the amount of socially necessary labor time spent in the production of an article. Has not the progress of socialist construction in the USSR shown that scientific-technological development ought to reduce the amount of socially necessary labor? This should mean the reduction of cost. But the projection of the perestroika economists is that prices have to be raised. Putting prices in line with costs and the adoption of new cost accounting methods all adds up to a redistribution of the national income in a way that spreads apprehension and fear among the workers. This is reflected in the lower bodies

of the Party, which, while by no means as faithful a representation of the working class as they should be, are nevertheless more significant than the cheerleaders for the reforms from the bourgeois intelligentsia of the USSR.

It is this problem that has to be addressed. If the stagnation of Soviet industry is so great, can it be due merely to the existence of lethargy and the prevalence of bureaucratic methods? Or is it due to a slowly but surely developing momentum toward modifying the social system in the direction of bourgeois norms, toward encouraging individual acquisitiveness, favoring individual entrepreneurs, vastly extending managerial prerogatives, stimulating competitiveness among workers—instead of promoting cooperation and solidarity and reawakening genuine mass enthusiasm? Isn't this what has to be discussed?

The problem of perestroika lies in the fact that this is an attempt to change social conditions, to redistribute the national product in another, more unequal way. It lies in the attempt to foist bourgeois norms, bourgeois incentives and bourgeois economic doctrines upon a socialist economy. They bring in their train all of the evils of a capitalist market economy. You can't improve it by calling it market socialism.

The issue is whether perestroika is oriented in the direction of strengthening the socialist perspective or whether it is an attempt at a throwback to favor the upper crust of Soviet society. The lesson of Poland ought to be sobering to the Gorbachev supporters, and even more so the lesson of Yugoslavia with its galloping inflation, its subordination to the imperialist IMF, its chronic unemployment and the reemergence of national antagonisms. □

CANADA

Protests in 16 cities denounce war in Afghanistan

By G. Dunkel

Rallies and marches on Oct. 18 in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver—Canada's largest cities—denounced the waste of Canadian lives and resources in Afghanistan. Significant protests also took place in Ottawa, Canada's capital, and at least 10 other cities, including St. John's, Newfoundland; Guelph and Windsor, Ontario; Winnipeg, Manitoba; and Calgary, Alberta, the hometown of Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

Ottawa organizer Dylan Penner distributed the prime minister's phone numbers and asked protesters to "try to get in touch with Stephen Harper today,

tomorrow and every day until he brings the troops home."

Canadian Union of Postal Workers national president Denis Lemelin spoke in Ottawa and pledged his support for the anti-war effort: "We're here to say no to the war. We will come back every time we have a chance to say, 'Our soldiers must come home and this war must end.'"

Hundreds of protesters marched through downtown Toronto until they reached the U.S. Consulate, chanting, "From Iraq to Palestine, occupation is a crime!"

Besides costing the lives of many Afghan people, Canada's intervention in Afghanistan has cost the lives of 97

Canadian soldiers, a diplomat and two aid workers. Many soldiers have also been severely wounded, but the government has not released those figures.

An official report from the Parliamentary Budget Office estimates that Canada will spend at least \$18.1 billion on its efforts to aid the Western occupation of Afghanistan by the time it finishes in 2011, and it has already spent between \$7.7 and \$10.5 billion.

Before the U.S. Consulate, prominent New Democrat Member of Parliament Olivia Chow referred to this report, saying: "That is shameful. Can you think of other ways to spend that money? How about dropping student fees, not bombs?

Affordable housing or a national childcare program and make poverty history."

Canada has four parties represented in its parliament: the Conservatives, the Liberals, the New Democrats and the Bloc Quebecois, the latter only running candidates in Quebec. Both the Conservatives and the Liberals support Canada's participation in Afghanistan, while the NDP and the BQ oppose it.

In the election Canada held Oct. 14, the Conservatives won 143 seats, the Liberals 76, the BQ 50 and the NDP 38. The issue of Afghanistan did come up, but the main focus of the elections was the economy.

While opposition to Canada's participation in the imperialist intervention is high throughout Canada, it is the strongest in Quebec. Besides the major march in Montreal, the smaller city of Sherbrooke also had one targeting the armories in that city.

In Montreal, hundreds turned out to march on a military installation and to demand Canadian troops come home.

"The majority of the population does not support any increases in military spending," said Raymond Legault, a spokesman from Echec à la guerre.

Legault said the protesters were not just a small group of people against the war. "We're the majority."

"Who are our governments serving?" he asked. "Is it NATO, the military industrial complex? Or are they there to answer to the Canadian people?" □

Iraqis protest U.S. occupation

On Oct. 18 in Baghdad, hundreds of thousands of Iraqis protested the "Security Pact" signed by puppet Iraqi executive Jalal Talabani and the U.S. that would allow U.S. troops, now at 150,000, to remain in Iraq after 2008. The Shiite movement led by Moqtada al-Sadr called the protest, and Sunni Muslims from Falluja and large parts of the Christian community joined it, reported Reuters from Baghdad. The main slogans were "Occupiers out!" and "No, no, no [U.S.] America!" Whatever their disagreements, almost all Iraqis detest a continued U.S. occupation and demand that Iraq's parliament reject the pact.

—John Catalinotto



Situation dire for people in Colombia

By LeiLani Dowell

While the people of Colombia continue to bravely resist overwhelming repression, government forces and U.S.-funded military and paramilitary groups have escalated the terror against them in recent weeks. Attacks, resulting in death and grave injuries, have been made on trade unionists and Indigenous peoples.

Sugar cane cutters fight for their livelihood

For more than a month, 12,500 sugar cane cutters, many of them Afro-Colombians, have been on strike in the departments of Valle del Cauca and Cauca. Their demands include an end to subcontracting “work cooperatives”; benefits such as sick time and pensions for workers who are disabled by the job (an average of 200 workers a year); and a 30 percent wage increase—currently the workers receive about \$1.42 per ton of cut cane. Until recently, the bosses have refused to negotiate with the unions, and as the strike fund becomes depleted, these cutters have faced a lack of food and medicine for their families.

On Oct. 9, the government of Colombian President Álvaro Uribe Vélez declared “a state of internal commotion” and sent in army troops to break up the

strike. According to an e-mail from the food workers’ union, Sinaltrainal, one of the unions involved in the strike, with this decree “they will try and break the labor conflicts, repress the workers and continue with the process of annihilating social organizations, with the argument that these are issues of public order that put the national security at grave risk.”

Indigenous fight back, face fierce gov’t repression

On Indigenous People’s Day, Oct. 12, Colombia’s Indigenous communities participated in a national mobilization in Cauca called “Commotion of the Peoples.” The mobilization’s main points included a rejection of so-called “free trade” agreements, demands for government compliance with Indigenous accords, the construction of a People’s Agenda, and an end to Plan Colombia—the U.S. military aid program for Colombia.

Thirty-five people were wounded on Oct. 14 when Colombian military and anti-riot police surrounded, then shot indiscriminately into a crowd of 12,000 people who were blockading a part of the Pan-American Highway to demand a face-to-face meeting with pro-U.S. Uribe. Both the Association of Indigenous Townships and the National Organization of Indigenous People (ONIC) expressed

grave concerns of a potential massacre at the hands of these forces. Four bodies were transferred to a morgue in the town of Caloto, but Indigenous authorities have been prevented from viewing and identifying them. ONIC reports that in the past two weeks, at least 19 Indigenous leaders have been killed throughout the country.

According to Jeremy Dear of the British organization, Justice for Colombia, more trade unionists have been murdered in Colombia during the Uribe regime than in the entire rest of the world in the same period. In the first part of 2008, those murders increased by 77 percent, according to the Colombian Trade Union Confederation. (www.counterpunch.org, Oct. 15)

Reams of evidence suggest that these murders are carried out in collusion with the Colombian government and military and the multinational corporations. The U.S. has given more than \$5.5 billion in aid to Colombia, the majority of which goes to military spending. A report released this month by Human Rights Watch states that the Uribe government has attempted to obstruct and undermine investigations into the connections between paramilitary groups and the country’s leading politicians.

With these atrocities as a backdrop,

Bush on Oct. 16 continued to push Congress for a free trade agreement (FTA) with Colombia. Trade unionists and others in Colombia have fought passage of the FTA, as it will lead to greater privatization of social services and an even greater influx of multinational corporations into the country.

The sugar cane workers’ strike is in dire need of funds to continue their struggle. At this point they have no means to even feed themselves. A desperate call for resources has been issued by Sinaltrainal to help keep the pressure and the strike on. “It would be a disaster if the strike fails because there is no food. ... There is no money to buy rice or potatoes to feed the workers, only water,” says a letter from a union organizer. The letter continues: “We have received great solidarity for the sugar cane conflict, but the situation worsens by the day since the funds diminish and there are 12,500 workers to feed. The situation with their families is even worse. There are close to 60,000 people whose basic needs of food and medical care are not met. ... Solidarity is URGENT. The bosses want to weaken the struggle through hunger.”

For information on how to provide financial assistance to these workers, email: hjceci@workers.org.

United Nations poised for broader intervention in Congo

Historical background to the current crisis

By Abayomi Azikiwe
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Congo, which was also known as Zaire, after 1971, under the rule of Mobutu Sese Seko (1965-1997), has for centuries been the coveted prize of the European imperialist nations and the United States as a result of its vast mineral wealth and hydroelectric potential. The Mobutu regime had always been supported and subsidized by France, Belgium, Britain, Germany and the U.S.

Congo’s initial contact with Western nations took place during the late 15th and early 16th centuries. The Portuguese colonialists established trade, diplomatic and religious ties with the pre-colonial kingdoms of Alphonso I and Diogo between 1506 and 1565. Catholicism had taken root and penetrated through the reign of Alphonso I and continued as a major cultural force for centuries.

Congo became the subject of an international conference in Brussels, Belgium, in 1876 that was convened by King Leopold II. The purported reason for the conference was to foster cooperative multinational efforts aimed at the scientific exploration of the Congo area, as well as to enforce the abolition of the slave trade in Central Africa.

Another ostensible objective of the gathering was to promote and develop commerce between European nations through the systematic exploitation of the resources of this territory. However, the magnitude of potential wealth present in this section of Central Africa prevented the harmonious resolution of how this country would be “explored” and subsequently looted of its natural raw materials.

As a result of these conflicts, King Leopold II set out to rapidly control and extract wealth from the area on his own, absent of any official governmental recognition from the state of Belgium. In the aftermath of the ill-fated conference on the

Congo in Brussels, Leopold II hired Henry Morton Stanley to return to the area with a mandate to negotiate treaties with the traditional leaders over the exploration and excavation of mineral resources.

According to African historian Joseph E. Harris: “This chain of events, set in motion by King Leopold’s efforts to carve out an empire in the Congo, represented a culmination of years of efforts by missionaries, explorers, merchants, and others to map out and assess various areas in Africa.

“Indeed, the Congo events dramatized and climaxed the conflicting interests of Portugal, France, and Britain, and led to the convening of the Berlin Conference in 1884-85. At the conference, the powers agreed that traders and missionaries of all countries should have free access to the African interior that the slave trade should be abolished and that European morality should be brought to Africans.

“It was also agreed that the Congo and Niger rivers should be open to all nationals. But more important than that was the stipulation that no new European colonies would be recognized unless they were effectively occupied, which meant that European officials had to establish visible and effective power in the areas claimed.” (Harris, “Africans and Their History,” 1972).

The Western European proclamation related to the abolition of slavery was merely designed to replace one form of exploitation and oppression with another more rational and profitable system, i.e., classical colonialism. Prior to 1908, Congo was known as the Free State and was controlled personally by Leopold and his functionaries.

The administrative structure of the colony represented an alliance between the Church, the monarchy and large-scale business enterprises. The king sought to maximize the economic exploitation of the territory by organizing massive slave labor camps heavily policed by royal and business overseers, who enforced astro-

nomical quotas of ivory and rubber collection on Africans displaced by mining production.

Those Africans who did not meet the ivory and rubber quotas were subjected to beatings, torture, mutilation and execution by the Belgian administrators. Between 8 and 10 million Africans perished during the initial onslaught of Belgian imperialism between 1876 and 1908. (Thomas Kanza, “The Rise and Fall of Patrice Lumumba,” 1991).

After 1908, the monarchy in Belgium relinquished personal control over the Congo colony and allowed the administration of the territory to be controlled by civil servants and business elements. Resistance emerged and grew during the course of the early- and middle-twentieth century. By the late 1950s, when liberation movements began to gain strength on the African continent, the masses in Congo demanded national independence from Belgium.

Lumumba’s international exposure during the All-African Peoples Conference (AAPC) in Accra, Ghana, brought the MNC leader to the attention of the Pan-African movement. The conference was held in December 1958 under the direction of the then Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah and the Bureau of African Affairs director,

George Padmore.

In the aftermath of the AAPC inaugural meeting, Lumumba gained the support of freedom-loving forces throughout the continent and the progressive world community of public opinion. On Jan. 4, 1959, rebellions erupted throughout the Belgian

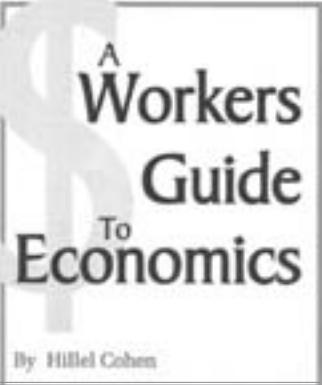
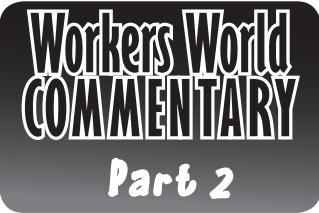
Congo, after a mass meeting was held by the MNC-Lumumba in the capital of Leopoldville.

The rapidity with which the transformation of political life swept the country was a phenomenon that

captured the attention of the international community. After a series of negotiations, the La Loi Fondamentale sur les Structures de Congo was ratified by the Belgian Senate with the signature of King Baudouin.

When elections were held inside the country, May 11-25, 1960, Lumumba’s party won a majority of seats within the National Assembly. On June 24, 1960, a unity government was formed with Lumumba as prime minister and Kasavubu of ABAKO, a regionally based, ethnic-oriented party, as head of state.

Part three will appear in the next issue. Abayomi Azikiwe has written extensively on the history and current situation inside the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Go to panafricannews.blogspot.com.



“A Workers guide to Economics” is a study guide to the basic economic teaching of Karl Marx. It is an introduction for workers and students of political economy, with a glossary of terms and tips for further reading included. The guide provides the correct answers to threatening issues often raised by the corporate bosses in the media:

- Do high wages cause inflation?
- Do pay raises mean layoffs and fewer jobs?
- Do unions cause inflation?
- Of course not! Find out why.

Order from World View Forum \$3 includes s&h
55 W. 17 St. 5 Flr., New York, NY 10011



Summit of sharks

As the global economic crisis intensifies, leaders from some of the largest capitalist economies are trying to save the economic system that enriches them and their class by impoverishing the vast majority of the rest of the population.

President George W. Bush emerged from the compound at Camp David outside Washington, D.C., on Oct. 18 flanked by French President Nicolas Sarkozy and European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso to announce that the U.S. will host an emergency world economic summit.

The exact date for the emergency economic summit was just announced as being Nov. 15 in Washington, D.C. What is not known at this time is its location.

Wherever it happens, it is sure to draw opposition from those fighting the devastating effects of the capitalist crisis on the lives of the workers and oppressed peoples.

The capitalist leaders will not be discussing how to help the millions of people who have suffered the loss of their homes, jobs and life savings in the current economic meltdown.

Instead they will be discussing how to best coordinate their criminal bailouts of a handful of the largest banks, transnational corporations, hedge funds and other financial institutions. This only accelerates the trend towards capitalist consolidation—monopoly—during this time of crisis.

Behind their facade of cooperation is the poisonous competition and jockeying for markets that is an indelible feature of imperialism and has in the past led to war among these same countries. The only thing that truly unites the guardians of these capitalist states is their fear that hard times will revive the struggles of the working class in their respective countries.

Some of the imperialist leaders appear to be lobbying for a restructuring of institutions like the International Monetary Fund and World Bank in order to make them better equipped to protect the profits of the transnational corporations and banks.

Indeed, the neoliberal economic model traditionally pushed by the IMF and World Bank has contributed to the global scope of the current meltdown.

By making aid to developing countries contingent upon financial market liberalization, among other “Washington Consensus” policy prescriptions, the IMF and the World Bank helped foster a growing cross-border interconnection between streams of finance capital. This increasing interconnectedness is one reason the crisis has spread so quickly and so thoroughly across borders.

When discussing the need for a world economic summit, Sarkozy said there needs to be “a new capitalism.” “We don’t want all this to start again; we want lessons to be learned,” he said.

But if there is any lesson to be learned, it is that economic crisis is inherent in the capitalist mode of production. There is no such thing as capitalism without crisis. Crisis is written into the very DNA of capitalism.

The anarchy of capitalist production ensures that crises of overproduction will always occur. As long as production is undertaken with the goal of obtaining profits and not with the goal of meeting actual needs, the next crisis will inevitably be right around the corner.

This crisis was not caused just by a lack of regulation in the financial markets or corruption on Wall Street. It was caused by capitalism and there is no permanent solution that doesn’t include the overthrow of capitalism and the creation of socialism.

While announcing the emergency world economic summit, Bush said, “it is essential that we preserve the foundations of democratic capitalism.”

For billions of workers and oppressed people around the globe who are homeless, jobless and hungry, it is getting harder and harder to see what exactly about this rotten, exploitative and crisis-prone system is worth saving.

When the imperialist leaders convene to advance their ideas on how to save the capitalist system, they can be assured that militant workers and activists will be there to meet them, ready to advance ideas of their own.

For information about how to get involved in demonstrations against the bailouts on Wall Street and at the upcoming economic summit, visit www.stopforeclosuresandevictions.org. □

‘Bail out Main Street, not Wall Street’



John Parker WW PHOTO

The following excerpts are from a commentary read by John Parker from the International Action Center on the Pacifica radio station, KPFK, in Los Angeles on Sept. 25.

Bush told us that we had better accept this 700-billion-dollar handout to financial giants before we all go under.

Secretary Treasurer Henry Paulson said, “This entire proposal is about benefiting the American people because today’s fragile financial system puts their economic well-being at risk.”

Mr. Paulson added that, “Without action, Americans’ personal savings and the ability of consumers and business to finance spending, investment and job creation are threatened.”

So he’s saying it’s about our savings and ability to purchase and the creation of new jobs, given the high unemployment rates we’re suffering from. Also, what’s been finally acknowledged by the Democrats and Republicans is the housing crisis, in particular the unprecedented rate of foreclosures.

So these are the problems that could possibly be helped, they are telling us, with the 700 billion, at least enough to get us out of hot water.

Well, here’s a thought: Why not solve the crisis of jobs and housing directly? What would happen if the government invested 700 billion into housing? This money could be used to provide assistance to at-risk families of renters and homeowners. To make the point of how much could be done, let’s go to the extreme and say the government just up and builds new homes. Through economies of scale and the use of eminent domain to acquire land (after all, they keep telling us this is an emergency), the government could build homes at a cost of no more than \$100,000 per home. This would mean that 7 million new homes could be built nationwide. Now, the foreclosure filings are predicted to go up to 2 million nationwide in 2008, so that would well cover the last few years of foreclosed families.

What would that mean for us here in California? Well, our portion of that 700-billion handout, according to the National Priorities Project, would be 89 billion. Or it could mean 890,000 homes this year in our state alone. That would about cover the

entire foreclosures of last year and the predicted amount this year. Now magnify that nationwide. Ok, housing crisis solved.

Well, what about jobs? Nationwide we could produce 23 million full-time jobs at \$15 per hour. Think that would put a serious dent in unemployment, and stimulate the economy? Once again crisis solved.

If the government did take these suggestions and use the 700 billion to directly create jobs and housing, it would not, however, be able to overcome capitalism’s fundamental problems that make these crises inevitable. But it would get us through the immediate crisis and significantly make a dent in the suffering of working and poor people while, at the same time, building a path towards full employment and the meeting of people’s basic needs of survival.

Their solution, however, does nothing to even slightly numb the pain their crisis has caused and will cause our class. It simply surrenders our future with blank checks to a ruling class of reckless bankers and brokers who’ve time and again proven their eager willingness to drive us further into crisis for the sake of profit, by any means.

So, given how easy it would be to get a handle on this mess, why haven’t the Democrats or Republicans considered this?

Well, I’m no economist, but I do know a little about conflict of interest and whose interests are being served here.

The financial publication Bloomberg reported yesterday that Goldman Sachs Group, Inc., one of the biggest beneficiaries of the \$700 billion, plans to buy assets from financial companies while many banks see limited aid, according to Bank of America Corp.

Isn’t it curious that Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson was the former chair and chief executive of the Goldman Sachs Group? However, Paulson is not just looking out for the interests of one financial institution; he’s protecting the interests of his class—made up of financial and industrial monopolies.

Believe me, it’s not us, the working class, they’re trying to save. Bail out Main Street! Not Wall Street! □

Emergency actions to save Troy Davis’ life

Thousands of people are mobilizing in a last minute effort to stop the execution of Troy Anthony Davis on Monday, Oct. 27 in Georgia.

Emergency protests are scheduled in many cities on Oct. 23, with a major rally on the steps of the Georgia State Capitol in Atlanta from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m.

Amnesty International, the American Civil Liberties Union of Georgia and Georgians for an Alternative to the Death Penalty, which has worked tirelessly over the years to bring justice in the Davis case, report new letter-writing campaigns by professors in Georgia colleges and clergy members, as well as students rallying on campuses.

The International Action Center has launched an online petition addressed to dozens of elected officials including presidential candidates Barack Obama and John McCain, major news outlets, U.N. bodies and the Georgia Pardons and Parole Board, which has the authority to stop the execution. Please go to www.iacenter.org and add your name to the hundreds of thou-

sands who are saying “Innocence Matters! Justice Matters!”

Davis, who has always maintained his innocence, was convicted of the 1989 murder of a Savannah policeman who was working off-duty. The state’s case rested on eyewitness testimony. There was no forensic evidence, no fingerprints, no weapon ever produced at the trial connecting Troy Davis to the shooting.

Seven of the nine trial witnesses have since recanted their testimony, several charging police intimidation and coercion for their false identification of Davis. Still other witnesses who were never called to testify in court have signed affidavits implicating another man.

State and federal appeals courts have turned Davis’ case down on technicalities, essentially saying the recantations are either not sufficient “new” evidence or have come too late. On Oct. 14, the U.S. Supreme Court refused to take up the issue. The state of Georgia immediately issued an execution date for Oct. 27.

—Dianne Mathiowetz

Subscribe to Workers World newspaper



4-week trial subscription for \$1 1-year subscription for \$25

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____ EMAIL _____

Send to WW Publishers, 55 W. 17th St., 5th Fl., NY, NY 10011
212.627.2994 email: ww@workers.org www.workers.org

What will YOU do about the worst capitalist crisis since the 1930s?

Uniting & fighting back is no longer a choice; it's a matter of survival

By Larry Holmes

Most people have heard that the economic nightmare—the “greed and profits before society” that the capitalist system is plunging us into—is the worst crisis since the so-called Great Depression of the 1930s.

What you won't get from the capitalist mass media is how the crisis of the 1930s transformed tens of millions of frightened workers and desperately poor people of all races and nationalities into a fighting force organized on the basis of class solidarity in an epic struggle against the capitalists and their government. By the end of the 1930s, it was not the super-rich, but the organized working class that seemed all powerful and unbeatable.

Working and poor people, devastated by the depression, entered the 1930s destitute, broken and hopeless. Yet by the time the decade was over, the working class had won great battles, first by organizing itself into Unemployment Councils and tenants unions and later into giant labor unions.

Social Security, Medicaid, millions of jobs created by giant public works programs and the right to unionize were among the major achievements of the struggles of the 1930s.

With the help of communist activists dedicated to fighting on behalf of the working class, people organized to stop landlords and banks from evicting families from their apartments or homes.

Workers in the auto, steel and many other industries discovered new tactics in their fight to win the right to belong to a labor union. In addition to going on strike, sometimes the workers decided to stay in the plants and factories where they were striking. They took them over until they won their demands.

A leaflet urging people to attend what

became one of the most famous mass protests against unemployment in New York City's Union Square in March 1930 simply read, “Fight or Starve.”

That was one of the biggest lessons that the working class learned during the 1930s—either we push aside all that divides us, and anything that someone can use to divide us like class, and fight like hell or we will not survive.

This lesson is as relevant today as it was 75 years ago. Whether we unite and fight back will be a matter of survival for most of us this time as well. Let there be no doubt: Unless you're rich, chances are either you will lose your job—some of you already have too little pay—and find it almost impossible to find a job or you will lose a place to live. Many will lose their student loans. Others will lose their pensions and find themselves burdened with debt and no health insurance. Many more of us will be homeless and hungry.

The cultural ideas and norms of recent times—ideas and norms invented and perpetuated by the capitalist system, the billionaires that it serves, their media, their schools, their hierarchy where most of us work and their political system—have not prepared us to act in our own interests in concert with others.

The ideas reinforced every day are that if you fail, it's your fault alone. The rich are rich because they're smart. Human nature is innately bad so don't trust those like you; you've got to compete with them. Along with these lies, there is the big one that “things will get better sooner or later”



Unemployed mass protest, St. Louis, Mo., 1933.

because “this is the greatest country and capitalism is not only the best system, it's the only one.”

The basic conspiracy afoot here is designed to keep us divided, confined to our own personal worlds, essentially left alone to deal with the crisis and the capitalist class that's at war with us 24/7.

With the incredible stresses of today, people certainly deserve the right to put their headsets on and zone out to the great music they've downloaded on their Ipods. Or veg-out on the several thousand cable stations on their TV (if their cable hasn't been turned off due to lack of payment). Or spend hours online, which is both social yet isolating at the same time. One can, of course, abuse substances of choice, but ultimately that does more harm than help.

Most people probably think, with good reason, that capitalism's most effective social control mechanisms are its racist police, FBI, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, courts, jails and the Pentagon, all now under the umbrella of “home-

land security.”

Obviously government repression is a problem. However, in and of itself, it's not enough to control the masses or stop us from rebelling.

Equally, if not more effectively, are the ways in which the system works very hard to program us not to unite and fight.

What the system does is a lot like what's depicted in the movie “The Matrix.” In the real capitalist matrix our comatose bodies are not warehoused

somewhere, while our drugged minds stumble around in a computer-generated dream world. Still, the function of the real capitalist matrix is more frightening and diabolical because it's not a movie.

The capitalist system works hard to keep our political consciousness paralyzed and in a coma in order to make us passive, regimented, disconnected from each other and thereby easier to exploit, which is what the parasitic capitalist system is really all about.

In order to unite and fight for our right to a job and a place to live, to healthcare and education, to all that we need and deserve, we're going to have to break out of the capitalist matrix. Some will break out before others, but most of us will make it out.

In the movie, Neo is given the choice between the blue pill which equals blissful ignorance, and the red pill which is the path to the truth and to revolutionary action. With every passing day, more and more workers will take the red pill. Which one will you take? □

Socialism is the answer to

Why capitalism can't meet human needs

By Fred Goldstein

Three-quarters of a million workers have already been laid off this year, bringing the official total of unemployed to over 9 million. Trillions of dollars in retirement funds have been wiped out in the stock market in the last few months. Over 10,000 households a day are being foreclosed, and evictions are rampant. Money for student loans has dried up. Credit card debt is at a record high. Unemployment is rising along with food, utility and gas prices. Production and sales are falling relentlessly. The forecast is for things to get worse—a lot worse.

All the most powerful financial officials and political leaders of the richest capitalist countries in the world have tried to stop the devastating advance of this economic storm. They have failed. The crisis feels like a force of nature. It brushes aside trillions of dollars in bailouts for the banks and keeps going. It is taking down everything in its path—homes, jobs and workers' lives.

But this crisis is not a force of nature. It is the force of the capitalist system in crisis.

This crisis began when the housing bubble burst. Capitalist banks were lending money to profit-seeking real estate developers to build houses. The same banks were lending money to mortgage companies to make as many loans as they could. The goal was to boost profits.

Soon there were more houses than the workers and the middle class could buy. The prices of homes fell. Mortgages could not be refinanced. Workers could not pay the steep increases in interest rates built

into their loans. Banks stopped lending. Millions of households went into foreclosure.

Put simply, people became homeless because there were too many houses! Not too many houses that were needed or already here, but too many houses that can be sold at a profit. Furthermore, the workers who build homes and all the workers who make the things that go into homes are losing their jobs because these homes can no longer be sold at a profit.

That is the essence of all the capitalist crises that have occurred since the

first crisis in 1825. It is the crisis of overproduction.

The global financial meltdown was triggered by the bad mortgage debts sold around the world. But what turned those debts into bad debts, in the final analysis, was the overproduction of housing.

Now the crisis of overproduction is sweeping the auto industry. From the auto industry and the housing industry it is spreading throughout the economy. The stock markets are plummeting because the financial bailouts, the pumping of tril-

Continued on page S 3

Karl Marx was correct!

- Plenaries, including **FIST** Panel
- Discussion groups
- Strategy sessions
- Music/spoken word



WORKERS WORLD PARTY CONFERENCE

Why Capitalism Must Go!

CONFERENCE • SAT • SUN • NOV 15 • 16

School Auditorium 127 E. 22 St. NYC

www.workersworld.net

The people or the bosses

Who's to blame for the foreclosure epidemic?

By Sharon Black

From television programs to radio talk shows—the victims of the foreclosure crisis are being made out to be the villains. The argument goes something like this: “People should have read the fine print” or “People were just too impatient and wanted big houses.”

Even worse is the myth that workers in general are responsible for the crisis “because all of us were just living beyond our means.”

Nothing could be more injurious than to blame those who are suffering for a system that they have very little control over.

To feel ashamed and alone is a recipe that guarantees that working-class and oppressed communities will not fight back. It also pushes individuals to take painful desperate measures.

The case of Addie Polk, a 90-year-old widow, is one of those examples. When the sheriff's department came to Ms. Polk's modest home in Akron, Ohio, to evict her, she shot herself in the chest.

It took this kind of desperate act for Fannie Mae to allow her to stay in a home that was originally priced at \$10,000.

In Baltimore, a majority Black city, the racist, predatory lending practices of Wells Fargo Bank are the subject of a lawsuit. The city charges that when Black people applied to the bank for mortgages, two-thirds were told they qualified only for the subprime mortgages. Only 15 percent of the bank's white customers in the same area were channeled into subprime loans.

This racist and sexist practice was multiplied across the country in Black and Latin@ communities everywhere.

But the foreclosure problem goes far beyond just the issue of “bad loans.” The estimated 10,000 homes foreclosed each day are tied to the broader crisis.

With the advent of high tech and the globalization of the economy, workers have seen their wages decline. At the same time the development of advanced technology has pushed capitalist production higher than ever.

With wages declining—the only way that workers can either survive, or in the case of the capitalist economy, buy back a fraction of what they produce—is to buy on credit.

How many workers have refinanced again and again just to pay off medical bills or for college education for their children? Who pushed credit cards and the extension of credit? Who pushed second mortgages on homes?

Even in the case of the housing market itself, the same forces were relentlessly at work. In every major city, rental units are overpriced. In most major cities the cost of an apartment is now one-half or even more than the average worker earns in a month.

The longtime standard has been that an individual should pay no more than one-fourth of their monthly wages on housing—something that is now virtually impossible. This situation forces workers into



WW PHOTO

Katrina survivors & supporters, NYC.

all sorts of deals, including fraudulent loan schemes, just to be able to have a roof over their head.

And the capitalists themselves are like drug addicts. Profit is a drug stronger than heroin or anything else sold on the street. It doesn't matter that there are real needs like housing, food and medical care. If a profit can't be made, then these critical needs will not be met. And if it is necessary to increasingly rely on credit and paper debt—no matter how dangerous—it will be done.

The so-called dream of owning a home has now been turned into a nightmare.

If there was any benefit at all, it was that after so many years workers could build equity in their home, which would give them some tiny sense of security, and that maybe your children, especially if you were working class, might have something after you died.

The present crisis has wiped that away.

Housing is a right!

In reality the dream has always been a myth under capitalism. There never has been that much separating renters from so-called homeowners. It is the banks that own workers' homes and for 25 or 30 plus years workers pay “rent” to mortgage bankers.

An immediate solution is to fight for a moratorium on all foreclosures and evictions. A moratorium would give workers and the general community a period of time to find larger solutions to the crisis.

The billion-dollar bailout and takeover of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac has now elevated this demand to a federal level. The government now controls 75 percent of the country's mortgages. This places the responsibility of acting on behalf of the workers at the doorstep of the federal government, which could end all foreclosures with the stroke of a pen.

Elevating this demand politically has the potential to allow working-class communities the confidence to proceed to more direct and immediate methods of stopping foreclosures—that is, stopping the sheriff from removing furniture and keeping families and individuals in their homes and apartments.

The problem of housing must be looked at on a deeper and more profound level. Why should housing not be readily available to all workers? Why should such a necessity be provided solely on the basis of whether it is profitable for some landlord, bank or real estate company?

In a country as wealthy as the U.S. there is no reason that anyone should go homeless or find it cost prohibitive to have a roof over their head. Clean, decent, safe and attractive housing must be a right for everyone! □

—Monica Moorehead

Sandra Hines

“People are going to have to mobilize and organize around the foreclosure issue and demand that the state and the federal government do what's necessary to fix the problem. It doesn't appear that anything is really in place now to truly help people. The only thing I can see as a solution is a moratorium—that people band together as one major force to call for a moratorium. That's the only alternative.”

—Sandra Hines, leader, Moratorium NOW! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures and Evictions in Michigan. Hines was evicted in December 2007 from her family's Detroit home of 37 years after it went into foreclosure.



WW PHOTO: KRIS HAMEL

Cynthia McKinney

Green Party presidential and vice-presidential candidates, Cynthia McKinney and Rosa Clemente, respectively, have put forth a 14-point economic platform which includes enactment of a foreclosure moratorium now before the next phase of ARM (adjustable rate mortgage) interest rate increases take effect; full funding for initiatives that eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in home ownership; and recognition of shelter as a right according to the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, to which the U.S. is a signatory, so that no one sleeps on U.S. streets. Go to votetruth08.com for more information.



WW PHOTO: JOHN CATALINOTTO

Larry Hales

I remember the hardships faced by many people in the Black community, as a child growing up in the Rust Belt in the eighties during deindustrialization—the poverty, the rise in crime and drug addiction, all in the wake of the decline of the great social upheaval of the 60s and 70s.

The hard times have come again, in the middle of two imperialist wars, neoliberal expansion and the growth of anti-imperialist leftist movements that have come to power from Latin America to Nepal—this as capital crosses borders, putting workers in the so-called Third World in competition with those in the imperialist nations more than in any other period in history.

But from this, the movement for a better world will grow, in understanding and in size. And through struggle we can topple this brutal system.

—Larry Hales, Fight Imperialism-Stand Together (FIST) national organizer



WW PHOTO

Nan Genger

“Calling for ‘concern not panic,’ the governor of Massachusetts just announced \$1-billion social service cuts and 1,000 layoffs—The Women's Fightback Network is outraged. We are clear that women and children, youth, the elderly, disabled, lesbian, gay, bi and trans people, and communities of color will especially bear the brunt of these program cuts. So we are fighting back! The WFN is on the streets to demand that an Economic State of Emergency be declared. As women we can unite and take the lead in building a movement to ‘Fund Human Needs, Not War and Wall Street.’”

—Nan Genger, Women's Fightback Network leader, Boston



WW PHOTO: LIZ GREEN

Martha Rojas

“Every little thing that you have, the corporations and the government want. And now they are using the economy as an excuse to take even more. At my husband's job they use the excuse of the economy to lay off one worker so they can make another worker work twice as hard and save more money. They're attacking immigrants more during this crisis and blaming the housing crisis on them for not reading the contract. The fact is they were lied to and tricked, especially if they didn't speak English because they were too busy working to survive to take English classes.

“Every two or three blocks I see a house being possessed by the banks. People are afraid to spend money because they're worried about losing their job. The same thing is happening all over California, especially in Latin@ and Black neighborhoods.

“And even though the bailout is only helping Wall Street and bankers, people are getting help from others—the actions that we do are helping people feel less isolated. That's why we're working to build unity between the unions and community organizations.”

—Martha Rojas, Co-coordinator, Labor-Community Coalition to Stop Foreclosures & Evictions, Los Angeles



WW PHOTO: SHARON BLACK

\$700 billion could fund people's needs

Instead of the U.S. government's \$700-billion (that's \$700,000,000,000!) giveaway to the banks passed by Congress in late September, this money could have been used to bail out the people in the U.S. immediately. How? There are numerous ways, but here are ten examples based on the Columbian Journalism Review, Associated Press and Women's eNews (Washington Bureau):

- **Reimburse home owners**, local governments and banks for nearly 9 million foreclosures and prevent 200 million more foreclosures.
- **Totally rebuild Katrina-devastated New Orleans** and the Gulf Coast three and a half times!
- **Guarantee universal health care coverage** for six years.
- **Pay off the \$550 billion in outstanding student loan debt** to both government and private lenders.

- **Allow 5.4 million students** to attend a public university.
- **Fund low-cost health care clinics** with a full range of family planning services, including access to contraceptives, counseling, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections—all for just \$759 million—one percent of the bailout.
- **Upgrade the most dilapidated bridges** four times over, along with coastal levees.
- **Pay close to six times the amount of current social security** benefits in one year.
- **Spend nine times more on education** than in 2007.
- **Pay the wages of 22 million workers for a year** based on the average nonsupervisory, non-agricultural wage of \$612 a week in August 2008. (U.S. Department of Labor)

—Monica Moorehead

Socialism is the answer to Why capitalism can't meet human needs

Continued from page S 1
lions of dollars into the banks, cannot stop the capitalist economic crisis.

Capitalism reinforces exploitation, inequality

Why is this inevitable? Under the capitalist system there is private ownership of the entire global means of production by a tiny group of millionaires and billionaires. Production goals are set inside each corporate empire in secret by the executives, who are their corporate agents. The goal is to amass maximum profits. But no company knows how much can really be sold at a profit.

On a corporate level production, is planned. On a society-wide level, production is socialized globally but completely unplanned. This is called the anarchy of production. This is what inevitably leads to overproduction.

The crisis is also inevitable under capitalism because the workers are an exploited class. The lower their wages are, the higher the bosses' profits. Profits consist of unpaid labor. The bosses take the products, services and infrastructure created by the workers, sell them on the market, pay the workers as little as possible and keep the rest. Every capitalist tries to lower wages to gain higher profits.

The collective action of the capitalist class, aided by the state, has driven down the wages and living standards of the multinational working class in the last thirty years. Under the system of capitalist exploitation wealth flows to the top, and the level of inequality is obscene.

The top 1 percent of the U.S. population, the super-rich who have all the levers of power in society, owned 34.3 percent of the wealth in 2004. The bottom 90 percent owned 28.7 percent. The top 400 individuals owned \$1.26 trillion in 2006, up from \$470 billion in 1995.

Racism and national oppression play a major role in the distribution of wealth under capitalism. The African-American, Latin@, Asian and Native peoples had the least to begin with and will suffer the most under the blows of this crisis. For example, the median wealth (that is, savings and other assets) of households by race in 2004 was \$140,700 for whites, \$20,600 for African Americans and \$18,600 for Latin@s. (See graphs.) This means that in this developing capitalist economic crisis the oppressed have almost nothing to fall back on to cushion the low wages, the layoffs and the foreclosures.

Oppression and economic discrimination also fall on women and lesbian, gay, bi

and trans people under capitalism. Like racism, the bosses use sex and gender bias as a way to divide and conquer. The growing witch-hunt against undocumented workers has the same poisonous, divisive goal. How else could 1 percent of the population dominate the workers and oppressed other than by sowing division and disunity?

Class unity is the nightmare of the ruling class. As the present crisis engulfs wider and wider sections of the workers, the potential for bringing about that unity is growing stronger.

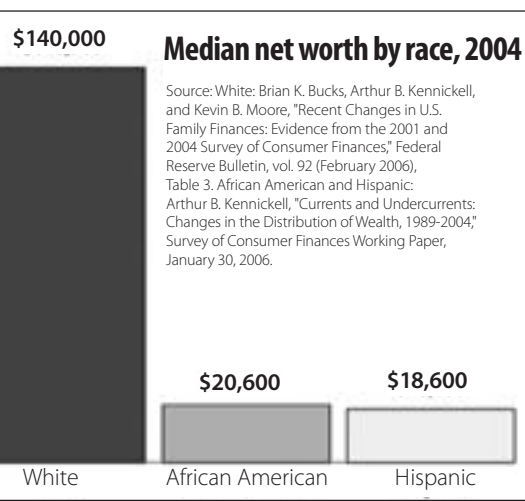
The drive for profit and exploitation here at home is the same drive behind war, occupation and intervention abroad. Trillions of dollars have been given to the military to protect corporate interests in the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Latin America. The Pentagon is nothing more than an enforcer for U.S. capitalism around the world—from the Persian Gulf to Southern Africa to the Pacific and the Caribbean. And as capitalism expands, it brings environmental destruction in its wake.

It is becoming clearer every day that capitalism as a system has got to go. A system in which people are homeless because there are too many homes must go. A system in which workers are losing their jobs and being plunged into poverty because they have produced too much wealth is a system that must be destroyed. A system which cannot provide jobs and education but imprisons 2.4 million people, the majority of them Black and Latin@, is bankrupt and does not deserve to continue another day.

If Cuba can do it, why not the U.S.

It must be replaced by a system where production takes place for human need, not for profit. The class that produces the wealth, the multinational working class, should own and distribute that wealth.

Trillions of dollars are now being used to bail out the banks and fund the Pentagon under capitalism. Under socialism, that money would guarantee that everyone would have a decent job and income, free health care, affordable hous-



ing, free education, low-cost transportation, healthy, reasonably priced food and much more. The well-being of the multinational working class would be the goal of society, not their exploitation as it is under capitalism.

If this sounds utopian, the fact is that socialist Cuba, poor as it is, with all its difficulties, has gone a long distance toward establishing these rights for the Cuban people. How is it possible that a country that was impoverished by centuries of Spanish and then U.S. colonial rule and that has lived for 50 years under a U.S. blockade, could guarantee more economic rights to its people than U.S. imperialism with its \$11 trillion economy?

Why is it that the Cuban people have a longer life expectancy and lower infant

mortality rate than oppressed people living in Harlem, Chicago's South Side, Los Angeles or the barrios of this country? The answer is that Cuba abolished capitalism, destroyed the capitalist state in a revolutionary struggle and took the road toward socialism.

The present economic crisis is bringing increased suffering to the workers in the U.S. and is spreading around the capitalist world. It demonstrates clearly the need for a mobilized, militant, mass working-class fightback.

The bosses want to push the crisis of their system onto the backs of the workers and the oppressed. But the ultimate goal of the working class must be to turn their fight into a struggle to abolish capitalist private ownership of the tremendous wealth that the workers have created.

The end of private ownership of the means of production would mean a vast increase in the personal property and social property of the workers. Right now, private ownership is strangling humanity and destroying the planet.

The final goal must be to eliminate economic crises, exploitation, oppression and war once and for all. The only way to do that is to establish a socialist society—free from greedy bosses and inequality—here and worldwide. □

The ups & downs of the stock market

The following excerpt is taken from a March 6, 2007, article, "The unnatural crisis of the global stock markets," written by Workers World managing editor Gary Wilson. Go to www.workers.org to read the entire article.

The source for capitalist crises, as [Karl] Marx the scientist revealed, comes from the way that capitalist production is organized. The source of value—workers' labor power—is hidden. Because the source of value is hidden, it is difficult to see that this is the key to capitalism's rises and falls.

Products seem to have a value on their own, when in fact it is the labor power put into production of the commodities that gives them their value. The magic of money is that it represents labor power and labor power is the source of wealth.

All values exchanged on the market are created by labor. The Wall Street stock market is like a gambling house where traders speculate on future values produced by labor. The stock market anticipates in an imprecise way how much sur-

plus value—that is, how much profit—the capitalists will be able to get out of the workers.

A "bubble" in the stock market comes when the cost of stocks far exceeds the actual profits that a company is able to get from the labor of the workers.

There is no way to predict what will happen on Wall Street, whether there will be a sudden fall or rise. But the fact is that capitalism is an inherently unstable system and there will be crises and recessions and increasing poverty as well as booms and soaring profits for a small few.

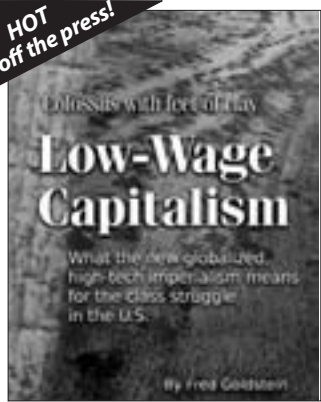
The important thing to know is that it doesn't have to be that way. The source of the problem is capitalism and not some force of nature. And capitalism can be replaced.

By understanding the economic forces behind capitalism, it is possible to overturn them through struggle and replace them with economic laws that put people's needs before profits and eliminate the source of economic crises. □

Low-Wage Capitalism

Timely new book by Fred Goldstein describes in sweeping detail the drastic effect on the working class of new technology and the restructuring of global capitalism in the post-Soviet era. It uses Karl Marx's law of wages and other findings to show that these developments are not only continuing to drive down wages but are creating the material basis for future social upheaval. The analysis rests on three basic developments in the last three decades:

- The world's workforce available to exploitation by transnational capitalist corporations doubled in the wake of the collapse of the USSR and Eastern Europe.
- The technological revolutions of the digital age, in both production and communications, have allowed transnational corporations to destroy high-wage jobs and simultaneously expand the global workforce to generate a worldwide wage competition.
- The decline in the economic condition of the workers, driven by the laws of capitalism and the capitalist class, is leading to the end of working-class compromise and retreat and must end up in a profound revival of the struggle against capital.

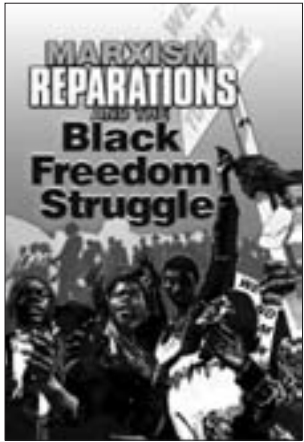


Hot off the press!
You can order the new book and help to promote it. To help with publishing cost donate \$25 to: World View Forum, 55 W. 17 St., 5th Flr., NY, NY 10011 212-463-7146

MARXISM, REPARATIONS AND THE Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper. Edited by Monica Moorehead. Includes:

- Racism, national oppression and self-determination
- Black labor from chattel slavery to wage slavery
- Black youth: repression & resistance
- Black & Brown unity: A pillar of struggle for human rights & global justice!
- Are conditions ripe again today? 40th anniversary of the 1965 Watts Rebellion
- Racism and poverty in the Delta
- The struggle for Socialism is key
- Domestic Workers United demand passage of a bill of rights
- Black Reconstruction: The unfinished revolution



Both books can be ordered online at Leftbooks.com "Low-Wage Capitalism" available after Nov. 1

El Socialismo es la respuesta al porqué El capitalismo no puede colmar las necesidades humanas

Por Fred Goldstein

Tres cuartos de millón de trabajador@s ya han sido despedid@s este año, incrementando la cifra oficial de desempleo a más de 9 millones. Billones (millones de millones) de dólares en fondos de retiro han desaparecido en la bolsa de valores en los últimos meses. Más de 10.000 hogares están siendo embargados al día y los desahucios no cesan. El dinero para préstamos estudiantiles se ha agotado. La deuda de tarjetas de crédito está a un nivel sin precedente. El desempleo está subiendo al igual que los precios de los alimentos, las utilidades (gas, electricidad, agua) y la gasolina. La producción y las ventas disminuyen incesantemente. El pronóstico es que las cosas van a empeorar muchísimo más.

Todos los oficiales financieros más poderosos y l@s líderes políticos de los países capitalistas más ricos del mundo han tratado de detener el devastador avance de esta tormenta económica. Han fracasado. La crisis se siente como una fuerza de la naturaleza. Barre billones de dólares en rescate para los bancos y sigue hacia adelante. Se lleva todo lo que encuentra en su camino—hogares, empleos y la vida de l@s trabajador@s.

Pero esta crisis no es una fuerza de la naturaleza. Es la fuerza del sistema capitalista en crisis.

Esta crisis comenzó cuando la burbuja de las viviendas explotó. Los bancos capitalistas prestaban dinero a los promotores inmobiliarios que buscaban obtener ganancias construyendo casas. Los mismos bancos le prestaban dinero a las compañías hipotecarias para que estas hicieran todos los préstamos posibles. La meta era la de aumentar las ganancias.

De pronto había más casas que las que l@s trabajador@s y la clase media podían comprar. El precio de las viviendas bajó. Las hipotecas no podían ser refinanciadas. L@s trabajador@s no podían pagar los agudos incrementos en intereses de los préstamos. Los bancos dejaron de dar préstamos. Millones de viviendas fueron embargadas.

En otras palabras, ¡la gente se quedó sin hogar porque había demasiadas casas! No que demasiadas casas fueran necesarias o que ya estuvieran construidas, sino muchas casas que pudieran ser vendidas obteniendo ganancias.

Además, l@s trabajador@s que construyen estas casas y tod@s l@s trabajador@s que fabrican las cosas

necesarias para éstas, están perdiendo sus empleos porque estas casas ya no se pueden vender por lucro.

Esta es la esencia de todas las crisis capitalistas que han ocurrido desde la primera crisis en 1825. Es la crisis de sobreproducción.

El desastre financiero global fue iniciado por las malas deudas hipotecarias vendidas por todo el mundo. Pero lo que las convirtió en malas deudas, en un análisis final, fue la sobreproducción de viviendas.

Ahora la crisis de sobreproducción está afectando a la industria automovilística. De la industria inmobiliaria y la automovilística se está extendiendo a toda la economía. Los mercados de valores se están desplomando debido a que los rescates financieros, los billones de dólares inyectados a los bancos, no pueden detener la crisis económica capitalista.

Capitalismo refuerza explotación y desigualdad

¿Por qué esto es inevitable? Bajo el sistema capitalista todos los medios globales de producción son propiedad privada de un grupo minúsculo de millonarios y multimillonarios. Las metas de producción son establecidas en secreto dentro de cada imperio corporativo por los ejecutivos que son los agentes de las corporaciones. La meta es la de amasar el máximo de ganancias. Pero ninguna compañía sabe cuánto se puede vender obteniendo ganancias.

A nivel corporativo la producción está planificada. A nivel de la sociedad, la producción está socializada globalmente pero sin ninguna planificación. Esto se llama la anarquía en la producción. Esto es lo que inevitablemente conduce a la sobreproducción.

La crisis es también inevitable bajo el capitalismo porque l@s trabajador@s son una clase explotada. Mientras más bajos sus salarios, más grandes son las ganancias de los patronos. Las ganancias consisten del trabajo no remunerado. Los patronos toman los productos, los servicios y la infraestructura creada por l@s trabajador@s, los venden en el mercado, pagan a l@s trabajador@s lo más poco posible y se quedan con el resto. Tod@s l@s capitalistas intentan bajar los salarios para obtener más ganancias.

La acción colectiva de la clase capitalista, ayudada por el estado, ha forzado la disminución de los salarios y las condi-

ciones de vida de la clase trabajadora multinacional de los EEUU durante los últimos 30 años. Bajo el sistema de explotación capitalista las riquezas fluyen hacia la cumbre, y el nivel de desigualdad es obsceno.

El uno por ciento de la población de los EEUU, los súper ricos que tienen todas las llaves del poder en la sociedad, era dueño del 34,3 por ciento de las riquezas en el 2004. El 90 por ciento más pobre era dueño de un 28,7 por ciento. Las 400 personas más ricas eran propietarias de \$1260 mil millones en 2006, más que los \$470 mil millones en 1995.

El racismo y la opresión nacional juegan un papel importante en la distribución de las riquezas bajo el sistema capitalista. Comenzando con que los pueblos africano-americano, latino, asiático, e indígena poseían menos, ahora sufrirán más los golpes de esta crisis. Por ejemplo, la riqueza promedio (el ingreso, los ahorros y otros bienes) de los hogares según la raza en 2004 era de \$140.700 para los blancos, \$20.600 para los africano-americanos, y \$18.600 para los latinos. Esto significa que durante la crisis económica actual, los pueblos oprimidos no tienen casi nada para amortiguar el impacto de los bajos salarios, los despidos y los desahucios.

La opresión y la discriminación económica bajo el capitalismo también afectan a las mujeres y a la gente lesbiana, gay, bisexual y transgénera. Al igual que con el racismo, los patronos utilizan el sexo y el prejuicio de género como herramienta para dividir y vencer. La creciente caza de brujas contra l@s trabajador@s indocumentad@s tiene la misma meta venenosa de dividir a l@s trabajador@s. ¿De qué otra forma puede el uno por ciento de la población dominar a l@s trabajador@s y oprimid@s fuera de sembrar división y desunión?

La unidad de clase es la pesadilla de la clase dominante. Mientras la crisis actual devora sectores más amplios de l@s trabajador@s, el potencial de alcanzar esa unidad se vuelve más fuerte.

La sed de ganancias y de explotación nacionalmente es la misma que impulsa la guerra, la ocupación y las intervenciones en el exterior. Billones de dólares han sido repartidos a las Fuerzas Armadas para proteger los intereses corporativos en el Medio Oriente, Asia, África, y Latinoamérica. El Pentágono no es nada más que el guardián del capitalismo de los EEUU alrededor del mundo —desde el Golfo Pérsico hasta África del Sur, el Pacífico y el Caribe. Y mientras el capitalismo se expande lleva en su estela la destrucción ambiental.

Cada día se ve más claro que el capitalismo como sistema económico tiene que terminar. Un sistema en el cual hay gente sin vivienda porque hay demasiadas casas, tiene que terminar. Un sistema en el que l@s trabajador@s pierden su empleo y se hunden en la pobreza porque han producido demasiada riqueza, es un sistema que debe ser destruido. Un sistema que no puede proveer ni empleo ni educación sino encarcelación a 2.4 millones de personas, la mayoría de ellas afro-americana-

nas y latinas, es un sistema fracasado y no merece seguir un día más.

Si Cuba lo puede hacer, ¿por qué no los Estados Unidos?

Este sistema debe ser remplazado por un sistema en el cual la producción exista para cumplir con las necesidades humanas, no para obtener ganancias. La clase que produce la riqueza, la clase trabajadora multinacional, debe ser la dueña y distribuidora de esa riqueza.

Billones de dólares están siendo utilizados para rescatar los bancos y financiar al Pentágono bajo el capitalismo. Bajo el socialismo, ese dinero garantizaría que cada persona tuviera empleo e ingresos adecuados, cuidado de salud gratis, vivienda a bajo costo, educación gratis, alimentos saludables a costo razonable, y mucho más. El bienestar de la clase trabajadora multinacional sería el objetivo de la sociedad, en vez de su explotación como es bajo el capitalismo.

Si eso suena utópico, el hecho es que Cuba socialista, aunque pobre, con todas sus dificultades, ha hecho mucho por establecer estos derechos para el pueblo cubano. ¿Cómo es posible que un país que quedó empobrecido por siglos de colonialismo español y luego estadounidense, y que ha vivido 50 años bajo un bloqueo de los EEUU, pueda garantizar más derechos económicos a su pueblo que el imperialismo estadounidense con su economía de \$11 billones?

¿Por qué es que el pueblo cubano tiene una expectativa de vida más larga y una tasa de mortalidad infantil más baja que le gente oprimida que vive en Harlem, en el South Side de Chicago, en Los Ángeles o en los barrios pobres de este país? La respuesta es que Cuba abolió el capitalismo, destruyó el estado capitalista en una lucha revolucionaria y tomó el camino hacia el socialismo.

La actual crisis económica está trayendo un aumento en el sufrimiento de l@s trabajador@s estadounidenses y está esparciéndose por todo el mundo capitalista. Muestra claramente la necesidad de una lucha militante por la clase trabajadora.

La clase dominante quiere poner la crisis de su sistema en las espaldas de l@s trabajador@s y oprimid@s. Pero el objetivo fundamental de la clase trabajadora debe ser hacer de su lucha una lucha para abolir la pertenencia privada capitalista de la tremenda riqueza que l@s trabajador@s han creado.

El fin de la apropiación privada de los modos de producción equivaldría a un enorme incremento en la propiedad personal y social de l@s trabajador@s. Actualmente la propiedad privada está estrangulando a la humanidad y destruyendo el planeta.

El objetivo final debe ser el de eliminar las crisis económicas, la explotación, la opresión y las guerras de una vez por todas. Y la única forma de hacer esto es establecer una sociedad socialista aquí y en todo el mundo, libre de patronos codiciosos y de desigualdad. □

PARTIDO WORKERS WORLD/MUNDO OBRERO

El porqué el capitalismo debe terminar

CONFERENCIA • SÁBADO – DOMINGO 15 Y 16 DE NOVIEMBRE
Auditorio en la calle 22 y Avenida Park sur • Ciudad de Nueva York

- Plenarias (con traducción si es requerida)
- FIST—organizando a l@s jóvenes y estudiantes
- Talleres de discusión
- Sesiones de estrategia
- Música y poesía



Llame al 212-627-2994
www.workersworld.net

CARLOS MARX
ESTABA TENÍA
RAZÓN